

DETACHMENT

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Now that we are at the beginning of Holy Week, and so very close to the moment when the Redemption of the whole human race was accomplished on Calvary, it seems to be an especially appropriate time for you and me to reflect on how Our Lord Jesus Christ saved us, and to contemplate this love of his—this truly inexpressible love—for poor creatures like us, who have been made from the clay of the earth.

Memento homo, quia pulvis es, et in pulverem reverteris.(1) Thus did our Mother the Church admonish us at the beginning of Lent so that we might never forget how very little we are, and that some day our bodies, now so full of life, will dissolve like a cloud of dust kicked up by our footsteps on a country road and will pass away 'like a mist dispersed by the rays of the sun'.(2)

The example of Christ

But after this stark reminder of our personal insignificance. I would also like to put before you another splendid truth: the magnificence of God who sustains and divinises us. Listen to the words of the Apostle: 'You know the graciousness of Our Lord Jesus Christ, how, being rich, he become poor for our sakes, that by his poverty you might become rich.'(3) Reflect calmly on this example of Our Lord, and you will see at once that there we have abundant material on which we could meditate a whole lifetime and from which to draw specific and sincere resolutions to be more generous. We should never lose sight of the goal which we have to reach, namely, that each one of us must become identified with Jesus Christ, who, as you have

just heard, became poor for you and for me, and suffered, that we might have an example of how to follow in his footsteps.(4)

Have you never wondered, out of a holy curiosity, just how Jesus carried through to its conclusion this outpouring of his love? Once again it is St Paul who gives us the answer: 'though being by nature God, (...) he emptied himself, and took the nature of a slave, fashioned in the likeness of men'. (5) My children, fill yourselves with wonder and gratitude at such a mystery and learn from it. All the power, all the majesty, all the beauty, all the infinite harmony of God, all his great and immeasurable riches, God whole and entire! was hidden for our benefit in the Humanity of Christ. The Almighty appears determined to eclipse his glory for a time, so as to make it easy for his creatures to approach their Redeemer.

'No man,' St John writes, 'has ever been God; but now his only-begotten Son, who abides in the bosom of the Father, has himself revealed him,'(6) appearing to the astonished gaze of men: first, as a newborn babe, in Bethlehem; then, as a child just like other children; later on, in the Temple, as a bright and alert 12-year-old; and finally in the lovable and attractive image of the Teacher who stirred the hearts of the enthusiastic crowds that accompanied him.

We have only to consider a few traits of God's Love made flesh and our souls are touched by his generosity; they are set on fire and feel gently impelled to contrition for having been petty and selfish on so many occasions. Jesus does not mind lowering himself in order to raise us from our destitution to the dignity of being children of God and brothers of his. You and I unlike him, often pride ourselves stupidly on the gifts and talents we have received, to the point of making them a pedestal from which to impose our will on others, as if the merits of our few relatively successful

efforts derived from ourselves alone. 'What do you have that you have not received from God? And if what you have, you have received, why do you boast as if you had not received it?'(7)

When we think of God's self-giving and the way he humbled himself—I am saying this so that each one of us can meditate on it and apply it to himself—then the vainglory and presumption of the proud man stands out as a truly hideous sin, for the very reason that such conduct is poles apart from the model given us by Jesus Christ. Think about it slowly: He, being God, humiliated himself; man, puffed up with self-love, tries to build himself up at any cost, without recognising that he is but a creature of clay, and poor clay at that.

When you were children, you may have heard the fable of the farmer who was given a golden pheasant. When the initial delight and surprise were over, the new owner began looking for a place where he could keep the pheasant. After several hours of doubting and changing his mind, he decided to put the pheasant in the hen house. The hens greatly admired the handsome newcomer and flocked round him with all the astonishment that might accompany the discovery of a demigod. While all this commotion was going on, feeding time came round and, as the farmer threw in the first handfuls of grain, our pheasant, who was starving after all the waiting, jumped greedily at the chance of filling his empty stomach. When they saw such vulgarity, their handsome hero gobbling down his food as hungrily as the commonest of birds, his disillusioned barnyard companions fell to pecking their fallen idol until they had plucked out all his feathers. Such is the sorry collapse of self-worship, which is made all the more disastrous the more presumptuously it is built upon the foundation of one's unaided ability.

As the trustees of certain talents, both supernatural and human, which you have to make good use of, draw your own practical conclusions for your daily life. And, at the same time, get rid of the ridiculous delusion that you have something that belongs to you alone as if it were the fruit of your own efforts. Remember there is an ever present factor, God, which no one can ignore.

Bearing in mind what I have just said I want you to be completely convinced that, if we really want to follow Our Lord closely and be of real service to God and the whole of mankind, then we must be thoroughly detached from ourselves, our intellectual talents, our health, our good name, our noble ambitions, our triumphs and successes.

I would also include—because your decision ought to go that far—the high ideals which lead us to seek only to give all the glory to God and to praise him. We can ensure our detachment by tailoring our will to this clear and precise rule: 'Lord, I want this or that only if

it pleases you, because, if not, I'm not the slightest bit interested.' By acting in this way, we are dealing a mortal blow to the selfishness and vanity that lurk in every conscience. At the same time we will find true peace of soul through this selfless conduct that leads to an ever more intimate and intense possession of God.

If we are to imitate Jesus Christ, our hearts need to be entirely free from attachments. 'If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For he who would save his life shall lose it; but he who loses his life for my sake shall find it. For what does it profit a man, if he gains the whole world at the cost of losing his own soul?' St Gregory makes the following comments: 'It would not be enough to live detached from things, if we were not to renounce ourselves as well. But . . . where shall we go outside of ourselves? Who is the one who renounces, if he leaves himself?'

'You must know that we find ourselves in two situations: in the one, we have fallen through sin; in the other, we have been formed by God. We have been created in one mode of existence but we find ourselves in another because of ourselves. So let us renounce ourselves as regards what we have become through sin, but let us stand firm in that which we have been constituted by grace. Thus, if the man who was proud is converted to Christ and becomes humble, then he has already renounced self; if a lustful man changes to a life of continence, he too has renounced self as regards what he was before; if a miser ceases to covet and, instead of seizing other people's property, begins to be generous with his own, he has most surely denied himself.'(9)

Christian self-control

Our Lord asks for generous hearts that are truly detached. We will achieve this if we resolutely cut the thick bonds or the subtle threads that tie us to ourselves. I won't hide from you the fact that this entails a constant struggle, overriding our own intelligence and will, a renunciation which, frankly, is more difficult than the giving up of the most prized material possessions.

The detachment which Our Lord preached, and which he expects from every Christian, necessarily brings with it external manifestations. Jesus *coepit facere et docere*.(10) Before teaching with words he proclaimed his doctrine with deeds. You have seen that he was born in a stable, in the most abject poverty, and that the first time he slept on this earth was on straw in a manger. Later, in the years of his apostolic journeyings, you will recall, among many other examples, the clear warning he gave to a man who offered to become one of his disciples: 'Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air their resting places; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.'(11) Nor should you forget to

contemplate the Gospel scene which shows the apostles staving off their hunger on the Sabbath day by plucking some ears of corn that were growing by the wayside.(12)

You might say that Our Lord's approach to the mission he received from his Father was to live from day to day, just as he advised his hearers in one of the most divinely challenging statements of his teaching: 'Therefore I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, what you shall eat; nor for your body, what you shall clothe it with. Life is a greater thing than food, the body than clothing. See how the ravens never sow nor reap, have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them; have you not an excellence far beyond theirs? . . . See how the lilies grow; they do not toil, or spin, and yet I tell you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If God, then, so clothes the grasses which live today in the fields and will feed the oven tomorrow, will he not be much more ready to clothe you, men of little faith?'(13)

If only we could live with more trust in divine Providence, strong in faith, in the certainty of God's daily protection which never fails, how many worries and anxieties we would be spared! Then that fretfulness which, as Jesus said, is typical of pagans, of 'the heathen world',(14) that is, of people who lack a supernatural outlook on life, would disappear. Now that I am confiding in you as a friend, as a priest and as a father, I would like to engrave upon your minds the conviction that since 'your Father well knows what you need',(15) we have every reason to be optimistic on our journey through this life, with our souls completely detached from those earthly things that seem so very necessary. God will provide. Believe me, this is the only way to be lords of creation (16) and to avoid the pitiful slavery into which so many people fall because they forget that they are children of God and spend their time worrying about tomorrow or a future that they may never see.

Once again, let me share with you a *tiny bit* of my own experience. I open my heart to you in the presence of God, utterly convinced that I am not a model for anyone, that I am but a piece of old rag, a poor instrument—a deaf and clumsy instrument—which Our Lord has used to show conclusively that He can and does write perfectly, even with the leg of a table. So, when I am talking about myself, it never occurs to me—in no way whatsoever—to think that there is any merit of mine in what I have done. Even less would I try to press you into following the paths where Our Lord has led me, since it may well be that the Master will not ask you for that which has helped me so much to work unhindered in this Work of God, to which I have dedicated my entire life.

Let me assure you, it's something which I have

touched with my own hands and seen with my own eyes, that, if you trust in God's Providence, if you abandon yourselves in his all-powerful arms, you will never lack the means to serve God, his Holy Church and the souls of men; and this without having to neglect any of your duties. You will then rejoice in the joy and peace which *mundus dare non potest*,(17) which possessing all the goods of the world cannot give.

From the very beginning of Opus Dei in 1928, apart from the fact that I had no human resources whatever, I have never personally controlled even a penny. Nor have I intervened directly in the financial aspects which naturally arise in any project that involves people—men of flesh and blood, not angels—who need material instruments to do their work efficiently.

Opus Dei has needed, and I think it's safe to assume that to the end of time it will always need the generous cooperation of many people in order to maintain its apostolic works. One reason for this is that such activities never show a profit. Another reason is that, even though the number of helpers increases and the work done by my children expands, if there is love of God the apostolate grows and the requests multiply. And so, more than once I have made my children laugh for, while strongly urging them to respond faithfully to God's grace, I was encouraging them to go to Our Lord and fearlessly ask him for more grace *and* for the money, the ready cash, that we needed so badly.

In the early years we were short of everything, even the most basic necessities. Attracted by the fire of God, there came to my side workers, clerks, university students, etc., who had no idea of the straits we were in, because in Opus Dei we have always managed, with God's help, to work in such a way that both our sacrifices and our prayers have been both abundant and unnoticed. When I now look back on those times my heart overflows in humble thanksgiving. What certainty we felt in our souls! We knew that in seeking first the Kingdom of God and his justice, we would be given all the rest as well.(18) And I can assure you that not a single apostolic initiative had to be abandoned for lack of material resources. Wherever it was necessary our Father God, through his ordinary providence, would ensure in one way or another that we got what we required so that we could see that he is always a 'generous paymaster'.

If you want to be your own masters at all times, I advise you to make a very real effort to be detached from everything, and to do so without fear or hesitation. Then, when you go about your various duties, whether personal, family or otherwise, make honest use of upright human means with a view to serving God, his Church, your family, your profession, your country, and the whole of mankind. Remember that what really matters is not whether you have this or

lack that, but whether you are living according to the truth taught us by our Christian faith, which tells us that created goods are only a means, nothing more. So, do not be beguiled into imagining that they are in any way definitive: 'Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where there is rust and moth to consume it, and where there are thieves to break in and steal it. Lay up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where there is no moth or rust to consume it, no thieves to break in and steal. For where your treasure is, where your heart is too.'(19)

When a man tries to build his happiness exclusively around the things of this world, and in this I have witnessed some real tragedies, he perverts their proper use and destroys the order so wisely established by the Creator. As a consequence the heart is left sad and unsatisfied. It starts following paths which lead to everlasting unhappiness and it ends up, even in this world, a slave, the victim of the very same goods which had perhaps been gained at the cost of countless efforts and renunciations. But, above all, I recommend you never to forget that God cannot find a place, that he cannot dwell in a heart which is bogged down by a coarse, disorderly and empty love. 'No man can serve two masters; either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will devote himself to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.'(20) 'Let us then anchor our hearts in a love that can make us happy . . . Let us desire the treasures of heaven.'(21)

I am not, of course, encouraging you to give up fulfilling your duties or claiming your rights. On the contrary, for any of us in normal circumstances to retreat on this front would be tantamount to a cowardly desertion from the battle for sanctity to which God has called us. You should therefore, with a sure conscience, endeavour (above all through your work) to ensure that neither you nor your family lack what is necessary to live with Christian dignity. If at times you feel the pinch of poverty, don't get dejected and don't rebel against it. I do however insist that you should try to use all the upright means available to get over such a situation, because to do otherwise would be to tempt God's providence. But while you are so fighting, remember too the *omnia in bonum!*: all things, even scarcity and poverty, work together unto the good of those who love God.(22) Get into the habit, from now on, of facing up cheerfully to little shortcomings and discomforts, to cold and heat, to the lack of things you feel you can't do without, to being unable to rest as and when you would like to, to hunger, loneliness, ingratitude, lack of appreciation, disgrace. . .

Father. . . do not take them out of the world

It is we, men walking in the street, ordinary Christians immersed in the blood-stream of society, whom Our

Lord wants to be saints and apostles, in the very midst of our professional work; that is, sanctifying our job in life, sanctifying ourselves in it and, through it, helping others to sanctify themselves as well. Be convinced that it is there that God waits you, with all the love of a Father and Friend. Consider too that, by doing your daily work well and responsibly, not only will you be supporting yourselves financially but you will also be contributing in a very direct way to the development of society, you will be relieving the burdens of others and maintaining countless welfare projects, both local and international, on behalf of less privileged individuals and countries.

When we behave this way, acting quite normally (just the same as our fellow men do) and with a supernatural outlook, we are simply following the example set by Jesus Christ who is true God and true Man. See how full of naturalness his life is. For thirty years he passes unnoticed as just another workman, without calling attention to himself, and he is known in his village as the son of the carpenter. The same is true of his public life. There is nothing off-key about it, nothing odd or eccentric. He had his group of friends like any one of his compatriots. There was nothing distinctive in his bearing: so much so, in fact, that Judas had to arrange a sign in order to single him out: 'Whomever I kiss, that is he.'(23) There was nothing peculiar about Jesus and I must say that I am greatly touched by this rule of behaviour of Our Lord who passed through life as just one more among men.

John the Baptist, who had a special vocation, wore a garment of camel's hair and ate locusts and wild honey. Our Saviour wore a seamless tunic, ate and drank as the others did, rejoiced at their happiness, was moved by the sorrows of his neighbours, and did not refuse the rest and shelter that his friends offered him. He made no secret of the fact that he had earned his living for many years working alongside Joseph the craftsman. This is the way we should behave in this world: as Our Lord did. I could sum up my advice very briefly as follows: we ought to go about in clean clothes, with a clean appearance and, most important of all, with a clean soul.

It is worth noting that even Our Lord, who preached such marvellous detachment from worldly goods, at the same time went to great lengths not to waste them. After the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves, whereby he had so generously satisfied the hunger of over five thousand men, 'he said to his disciples, "Gather the fragments that are left over, lest they be wasted." They therefore gathered them up; and they filled twelve baskets.'(24) If you reflect carefully on this whole scene, you will learn never to be mean or miserly, but rather how to be good administrators of the talents and the material resources God has given you.

Following this example we see in Our Lord, who is our model, I preach that detachment is self-dominion. It is not a noisy and showy beggarliness, nor is it a mask for laziness and neglect. You should dress in accordance with the demands of your social standing, your family background, your work. . . as your companions do, but to please God: eager to present a genuine and attractive image of true Christian living. Do everything with naturalness, without being extravagant. I can assure you that in this matter it is better to err on the side of excess than to fall short. How do you think Our Lord dressed? Haven't you pictured to yourself the dignity with which he wore his seamless cloak which had probably been woven for him by Our Lady? Don't you remember how, in Simon's house, he was grieved because he had not been offered water to wash his hands before taking his place at the table?(25) No doubt he drew attention to this example of bad manners to underline his teaching that love is shown in little details. But he also wants to make it clear that he stands by the social customs of his time, and therefore you and I must make an effort to be detached from the goods and comforts of the world, but without doing anything that looks odd or peculiar.

As far as I am concerned, one of the signs that we're aware of being lords of the earth and God's faithful administrators is the care we take of the things we use: keeping them in good condition, making them last and getting the best out of them so that they serve their purpose for as long a time as possible and don't go to waste. In the Centres of Opus Dei you will find the decoration simple, attractive and, above all, clean, because poverty in a home is not to be confused with bad taste or with dirt. Nevertheless, it seems quite natural to me that, in keeping with our means and your social and family commitments, you should possess some objects of value which you take care of with a spirit of mortification and detachment.

Many years ago, twenty-five and more, I used to visit an eating place run by a charitable group for the benefit of beggars who were so poor that their only food each day was the meal they were given there. There was a large canteen looked after by a number of kind women. After the first meal was served, more beggars would come in to finish off the leftovers. Among this second group of beggars one man in particular attracted my attention. He was the proud owner of a pewter spoon! He would take it carefully out of his pocket, look at it covetously and, after he had downed his meagre ration, he would look at the spoon again with eyes that seemed to exclaim: 'It's mine!' Next he would lick it a couple of times to clean it and then, with deep satisfaction, would hide it away again in the folds of his tattered garment. True enough, the spoon was *his!* Here was a wretchedly poor beggar who, among his companions in misfor-

tune, thought himself to be rich.

Around that same time I knew a titled lady who belonged to the Spanish aristocracy. In the eyes of God such a thing counts for nothing. We are all equal, all of us are children of Adam and Eve, weak creatures with virtues and defects, and capable all of us, if Our Lord abandons us, of committing the worst crimes imaginable. Ever since Christ redeemed us there are no distinctions of race, language, colour, birth, or wealth: *we are all children of God.* This lady of whom I have just been speaking lived in an ancestral mansion. But she spent next to nothing on herself. On the other hand she paid her servants very well and gave the rest of her money to the needy, while depriving herself of almost everything. This lady had many of the goods which so many people are anxious to obtain but she personally was poor, given to mortification and completely detached from everything. Am I making myself clear? In any event, all we need do is listen to the words of Our Lord: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.'(26)

If you want to achieve this spirit, I would advise you to be sparing with yourself while being very generous towards others. Avoid unnecessary expenditure on luxuries and comforts, whether out of caprice, or vanity, etc. Don't create needs for yourself. In other words, learn from St. Paul 'to live in poverty and to live in abundance, to be filled and to be hungry, to live in plenty and to live in want: I can do all things in him who comforts me'.(27) Like the Apostle, we too will come out winners in this spiritual combat if we keep our hearts unattached and free from ties.

'All of us who enter the arena of the faith', says St Gregory the Great, 'are committed to fight against evil spirits. The devils possess nothing in this world and therefore, since they enter the lists naked, we too must fight naked. Because, if someone who is clothed fights against someone who goes naked, he will soon be dragged down, since his enemy has something to get a grip on. And what are the things of this world if not a kind of apparel?'(28)

God loves the cheerful giver

Within the general framework of total detachment which Our Lord asks of us I would like to point out to you another particularly important aspect: our health. Most of you here are young. You are passing through that splendid period of being full of life, brimming over with energy. But time passes and inexorably we begin to notice a physical decline; then come the limitations of maturity and finally the infirmities of old age. Moreover, any of us, at any moment, can fall ill or suffer some bodily disorder.

Only if we have a truly Christian appreciation of our periods of physical well-being, of 'our good times', will be able to accept with supernatural cheer-

fulness such happenings as people mistakenly call bad. Without going into too many details I would like to pass on to you my own personal experience in this area. When we are sick we can get very tiresome: 'they aren't looking after me properly, nobody cares about me, I'm not getting the attention I deserve, nobody understands me. . .'. The devil, who is always on the lookout, can attack from any angle. When people are ill his tactics consist in stirring up a kind of psychosis in them so as to draw them away from God and fill the atmosphere with bitterness, or destroy that treasure of merits earned (on behalf of souls everywhere) by pain, that is, when it is borne with supernatural optimism, when it is loved! Therefore, if God wills that we be struck down by some affliction, take it as a sign that he considers us mature enough to be associated even more closely with his redeeming Cross.

What we need therefore is a long-term preparation, by practising daily a holy detachment from self, so that we are prepared to bear sickness or misfortune gracefully if Our Lord permits them. Begin now to make use of everyday opportunities: something you may have to do without, small recurring pains, voluntary mortifications, and also put into practice the Christian virtues.

We have to make demands on ourselves in our daily lives. In this way we will not go about inventing false problems and ingenious needs which, in the last analysis, are prompted by conceit, capriciousness and a comfort-loving and lazy approach to life. We ought to be striding towards God at a fast pace, carrying no deadweights or impedimenta which might hinder our progress. Since poverty of the spirit does not consist in not having things but rather in being truly detached from what we have, we need to be vigilant so as not to be deceived by our imagination into thinking we can't survive unless we have certain things. As St Augustine puts it: 'Seek what suffices, seek what is enough, and don't desire more. Whatever goes beyond that, produces anxiety not relief: it will weigh you down, instead of lifting you up.'(29)

In giving you this advice I am not thinking of exceptional or complicated situations. I know a person who used some slips of paper as book marks on which he wrote out some ejaculatory prayers to help him keep in the presence of God. One day he found himself wanting to keep those *treasures* and he suddenly realised that he was getting attached to the silly bits of paper. Now you see what a model of virtue we have here! I wouldn't mind telling you about every one of my weaknesses, if it were of any use to you. I have merely drawn the cloak aside a little because something similar might be happening to you: your books, your clothes, your desk, your. . . tin can idols.

In such cases, my recommendation is that you consult your spiritual director. Don't be childish or

scrupulous about it. At times the best remedy will be the small mortification of doing without something for a short space of time. Or, to take a different example, it would probably do you no harm to give up your normal means of transport occasionally and to give to charity the money you thereby save, no matter how small the amount may be. In any case, if you really have a true spirit of detachment from things, you will not fail to find all kinds of effective and unobtrusive ways of putting it into practice.

Having opened my heart to you I must also confess to one attachment which I have no intention of ever giving up; it is my deep love for each and every one of you. I have learned it from the best Teacher there is, and I would like to follow his example most faithfully, by loving all men with all my heart, starting with those about me. Are you not moved when you think of Jesus' ardent charity—his tenderness!—which lead the Evangelist to describe one of his disciples as the one *quem diligebat Jesus*,(30) the one whom Jesus loved?

We will finish with a quotation which the Gospel of today's Mass offers for our consideration: 'Six days before the Paschal feast Jesus went to Bethany where Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised to life, had died. And a feast was made for him there, at which Martha was waiting at table, while Lazarus was one of his fellow guests. And now Mary brought in a pound of pure spikenard ointment, which was very precious, and poured it over the feet of Jesus, wiping his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the scent of the ointment.'(31) What a shining proof of magnanimity is this *extravagance* on Mary's part! Judas on the other hand laments this *waste* of so valuable a perfume; in his greed he had been calculating the price: it would have fetched at least 'three hundred silverpieces'.(32)

True detachment leads to be very generous with God and with our fellow men. It makes us actively resourceful and ready to spend ourselves in helping the needy. A Christian cannot be content with a job that only allows him to earn enough for himself and his family. He will be big-hearted enough to give others a helping hand both out of charity and as a matter of justice, in the manner described by St Paul when writing to the Romans: 'Macedonia and Achaia have thought fit to make a contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. They have thought fit to do it, I say, and indeed they are in their debt. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual blessings, they should also contribute to their temporal needs in return.'(33)

Don't be mean and grudging with people who, without counting the cost, have given of their all, everything they have, for your sake. Just ask yourselves, how much does it cost you—in financial terms as well—to be Christians? Above all, don't forget that 'God loves a cheerful giver. And God has

the power to supply you abundantly with every kind of blessing, so that, with all your needs well supplied at all times, you may have something to spare for every work of mercy.’(34)

As we draw closer during this Holy Week to the suffering of Jesus Christ, let us ask the Blessed Virgin Mary to enable us, like her,(35) to keep all these things in our minds and ponder over them in our hearts.

(1) *Remember man that thou art dust, and unto dust thou shalt return*’, from the Rite of the Imposition of Ashes (cf. Gen 3:19). 2. Wisd 2:4. (3) 2 Cor 8:9. (4) Cf. 1 Pet 2:21. (5) Phil 2:6-7. (6) John 1:18. (7) 1 Cor 4:7. (8) Matt 16:24-26. (9) *St. Gregory the Great*, Homiliae in Evangelia, 32, 2 (PL 76, 1233). (10) *‘He began to do and to teach’* (Acts 1:1). (11) Luke 9:58. (12) Cf. Mark 2:23. (13) Luke 12:22-24, 27-28. (14) Luke 12:30. (15) Luke 12:30. (16) Cf. Gen 1:26-31. (17) *‘the world cannot give’* (cf. John 14:27). (18) Cf. Matt 6:33. (19) Matt 6:19-21. (20) Matt 6:24. (21) *St. John Chrysostom*, In Matthaicum homiliae, 63, 3 (PG 58, 607). (22) Cf. Rom. 8:28. (23) Matt 26:48. (24) John 6:12-13. (25) Cf. Luke 7:36-50. (26) Matt 5:3. (27) Phil 4:12-13. (28) *St Gregory the Great*, Homiliae in Evangelia, 32, 2(PL 76, 1233). (29) *St Augustine*, Sermo LX-XXV, 6 (PL 38, 523). (30) John 13:23. (31) John 12:1-3. (32) John 12:5. (33) Rom 15:26-27. (34) 2 Cor 9:7-8. (35) Cf. Luke 2:19.