

St. John Chrysostom: john on priesthood

St. John Chrysostom: John On Priesthood 45Book III. 1. Chrysostom: As regards the insult to those who have done me honor, what I have already said is sufficient to prove that in avoiding this office I had no desire to put them to shame; but I will now endeavor to make it evident, to the best of my ability, that I was not puffed up by arrogance of any kind. For if the choice of a generalship or a kingdom had been submitted to me, and I had then formed this resolution, any one might naturally suspected me of this fault, or rather I should have been found guilty by all men, not of arrogance, but of senseless folly. But when the priesthood is offered to me, which exceeds a kingdom as much as the spirit differs from the will any one dare to accuse me of disdain? And is it not preposterous to charge with folly those who reject small things, but when any do this in matters of pre-eminent importance, to exempt such persons from accusations of derangement, and yet subject them to the charge of pride? It is just as if one were to accuse, not of pride, but of insanity, a man who looked with contempt on a herd of oxen and refused to be a herdsman, and yet were to say who declined the empire of the world, and the command of all the armies of the earth, was not mad, but inflated with pride. But this assuredly is not the case; and they who say such things do not injure me more than they injure themselves. For merely to imagine it possible for human nature to despise this dignity is an evidence against those who bring this charge of the estimate which they have formed of the office. For if they did not consider it to be an ordinary thing of no great account, such a suspicion as this would never have entered their heads. For why is it that one has ever dared to entertain such a suspicion with reference to the dignity of the angels, and to say that that is the reason why human nature would not aspire to the rank of the angelic nature? It is because we imagine something concerning those powers, and this does not suffer us to believe that a man can conceive anything greater than honor. Wherefore one might with more justice indict those persons of arrogance who accuse me of it. For they have suspected this of others if they had not previously depreciated the matter as being of no account. But if they think that I have done this with a view to glory, they will be convicted of fighting openly against themselves and fall into their own snare; for I do not know what kind of arguments they could have sought in preference to these had wished to release me from the charge of vainglory. 2. For if this desire had ever entered my mind, I ought to have accepted the office rather than avoided it. Why? because it would have brought me much glory. For the fact that my age, who had so recently abandoned secular pursuits, should suddenly be deemed by all worthy of such and be advanced to honor before those who have spent all their life in labors of this kind, and to obtain more votes all of them, might have

persuaded all men to anticipate great and marvellous things of me. But, as it is, the greater part of the Church does not know me even by name: so that even my refusal of the office will not be manifest only to a few, and I am not sure that all even of these know it for certain; but probably many of them either imagine that I was not elected at all, or that I was rejected after the election, being considered unsuitable, not that I avoided the office of my own accord. 3. Basil: But those who do know the truth will be surprised. Chrysostom: And these are they who, according to you, falsely accuse me of vainglory and pride. Whence then am I to hope for? From the many? They do not know the actual fact. From the few? Here again the matter is perverted to my disadvantage. For the only reason why you have come here now is to learn what answer ought to be given to them. And what can I certainly say on account of these things? For wait a little, and you will clearly perceive that even if all know the truth they ought not to condemn me for pride and love of glory. And in addition to this there is another consideration that not only those who make this venture, if there be any such (which for my part I do not believe), but also those who suspect it of others, will be involved in no small danger. 4. For the priestly office is indeed discharged on earth, it ranks amongst heavenly ordinances; and very naturally so: for neither man, nor angel, nor archangel, nor any created power, but the Paraclete Himself, instituted this vocation, and persuaded men while still abiding in the flesh to represent the ministry of angels. Wherefore the consecrated priest ought to be as pure as if he were standing in heaven himself in the midst of those powers. Fearful, indeed, and of most awful import, were the things we used before the dispensation of grace, as the bells, the pomegranates, the stones on the breastplate and on the girdle, the mitre, the long robe, the plate of gold, the holy of holies, the deep silence within.⁸⁶⁸⁶ Exod. xxvi 4 sq. But if any one should examine the things which belong to the dispensation of grace, he will find that, small as they are, yet are they fearful and full of awe, and that what was spoken concerning the law is true in this case also, that what has been made glorious hath no glory in this respect by reason of the glory which excelleth.⁸⁷⁸⁷ 2 10. For when thou seest the Lord sacrificed, and laid upon the altar,⁸⁸⁸⁸ The Holy Eucharist is frequently called Chrysostom and other Greek Fathers the Sacrifice, sometimes the unbloody Sacrifice, partly as being an offering of praise and thanksgiving, partly as being a commemoration or representation of the sacrifice of Christ. We must mind that no controversy had then arisen about this Sacrament, and that writers could freely use expressions which later times would have been liable to objection or misconstruction. The passage before us must be read in the other passages in Chrysostom's works; but one of these is sufficient to indicate the sense in which it is to be understood. In Homily xvii. c. 3. on the Epistle to the Hebrews, after contrasting the many and ineffectual sacrifice of the Jews with the one perfect and efficient sacrifice of Christ, he proceeds, What then? do we not make an everyday? We do, certainly, but by making a memorial of His death; and this memorial is one, not many. How many? Because the sacrifice was offered once for

all, as that great sacrifice was in the Holy of Holies. This is a figure of that great sacrifice, as that was of this: for we do not offer one victim to-day and another to-morrow, but always the same: wherefore the sacrifice is one. Well, then, as He is offered in many places, are there many? No, by no means, but everywhere one Christ, complete both in this world and in the other, one body. As then, though offered in many places, He is but one body, so is there but one sacrifice. Our High Priest is He who offers the sacrifice which cleanses us. We offer that now which was offered then: which is indeed unconsumable. This take now, for a memorial of what took place then. Do this, said He, for my memorial. We do not then offer a different sacrifice, as the high priest formerly did, but always the same; or rather we celebrate a memorial of a sacrifice. The priest standing and praying over the victim, and all the worshippers empurpled with that precious blood, may be only a rhetorical expression, but perhaps there is an allusion to a custom which prevailed in some churches after receiving the cup applied the finger to the moistened lip, and then touched their breast, and ears. Canst thou then think that thou art still amongst men, and standing upon the earth? Art thou not, on the contrary, translated to Heaven, and casting out every carnal thought from the soul, dost thou not with disengaged spirit and pure reason contemplate the things which are in Heaven? Oh! what a marvel! what love of God to manifest himself on high with the Father is at that hour held in the hands of all! The caution mentioned just now in no must be repeated here. A comparison of passages in the writings of Chrysostom and his contemporaries prove enough that they did not hold that the elements of bread and wine were transmuted into the body and blood of such a sense as to cease to be bread and wine. The authenticity of the letter of Chrysostom to Cæsarius is do whoever the writer may have been, he is clearly representing the current orthodox belief of the Church in his day. He maintains, in opposition to the Apollinarian or perhaps the Eutychian heresy, that there are two complete natures in one person of God the Son Incarnate, and illustrates it by the following reference to the holy elements in the Eucharist: Just as the bread before consecration is called bread, but when the Divine Grace sanctifies it through the agency of the priest it is released from the appellation of bread, and is deemed worthy of the appellation of the Lord's Body, although the nature of bread remains in it, and we speak not of two bodies, but one body of the here the Divine nature being seated in the human body, the two together make up but one Son, one Person. He manifests Himself to those who are willing to embrace and grasp Him. And this all do through the eyes of faith! So omit the word of faith, having its place at that time. Do these things seem to you fit to be despised, or such as to make it possible for any one to be uplifted against them? Would you also learn from an miracle the exceeding sanctity of this office? Picture Elijah and the vast multitude standing around him, and the sacrifice laid upon the altar of stones, and all the rest of the people hushed into a deep silence while the prophet alone offers up prayer: then the sudden rush of fire from Heaven upon the sacrifice: these

are marvellous things charged with terror. Now then pass from this scene to the rites which are celebrated in the present day; they are only marvellous to behold, but transcend in terror. There stands the priest, not bringing down fire from Heaven; the Holy Spirit: and he makes prolonged supplication,⁹²⁹² In the Liturgy which bears the name of St. Chrysostom following invocation of the Holy Spirit occurs: Grant that we may find grace in thy sight that our sacrifice may be acceptable to Thee, and that the Good Spirit of thy grace may rest upon us, and upon these gifts spread before upon all Thy people, and presently the deacon bids the people, Let us pray on behalf of the precious gifts (i. e. bread and wine) which have been provided, that the merciful God who has received them upon His holy spirit upon beyond the heavens may in return send down upon us the divine grace and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost. A flame sent down from on high may consume the offerings, but that grace descending on the sacrifice may then the souls of all, and render them more refulgent than silver purified by fire. Who can despise this most awful unless he is stark mad and senseless? Or do you not know that no human soul could have endured that fire in sacrifice, but all would have been utterly consumed, had not the assistance of God's grace been great. 5. For I will consider how great a thing it is for one, being a man, and compassed with flesh and blood, to be enabled to night to that blessed and pure nature, he will then clearly see what great honor the grace of the Spirit has vouch to priests; since by their agency these rites are celebrated, and others nowise inferior to these both in respect of dignity and our salvation. For they who inhabit the earth and make their abode there are entrusted with the administration of things which are in Heaven, and have received an authority which God has not given to angel archangels. For it has not been said to them, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven.⁹³⁹³ Matt. xviii. 18. They who rule on earth have authority to bind, but only the body: whereas this binding lay hold of the soul and penetrates the heavens; and priests do here below God ratifies above, and the Master confirms the sentence of his servants. For indeed what but all manner of heavenly authority which He has given them when He says, Whose sins ye remit they are remitted, whose sins ye retain they are retained?⁹⁴⁹⁴ John xx. 23. What authority could be greater than this? The Father committed all judgment to the Son?⁹⁵⁹⁵ John v. 22. But I see it all put into the hands of these men by the Son; they have been conducted to this dignity as if they were already translated to Heaven, and had transcended human nature and were released from the passions to which we are liable. Moreover, if a king should bestow this honor upon subjects, authorizing him to cast into prison whom he pleased and to release them again, he becomes an object of respect to all men; but he who has received from God an authority as much greater as Heaven is more pre-eminently earth, and soul more precious than bodies, seems to some to have received so small an honor that they are able to imagine that one of those who have been entrusted with these things will despise the gift. Away with such men! For transparent

madness it is to despise so great a dignity, without which it is not possible to obtain either our salvation, or the good things which have been promised to us. For if no one can enter into the kingdom of Heaven but he who is regenerate through water and the Spirit, and he who does not eat the flesh of the Lord and drink His blood excluded from eternal life, and if all these things are accomplished only by means of those holy hands, I mean of the priest, how will any one, without these, be able to escape the fire of hell, or to win those crowns which are reserved for the victorious? 6. These very are they who are entrusted with the pangs of spiritual travail and the birth which comes through baptism: by their means we put on Christ, and are buried with the Son of God, and members of that blessed Head. Wherefore they might not only be more justly feared by us than rulers and kings be more honored than parents; since these beget us of blood and the will of the flesh, but the others are the authors of our birth from God, even that blessed regeneration which is the true freedom and the sonship according to grace. Jewish priests had authority to release the body from leprosy, or, rather, not to release it but only to examine the one who was already released, and you know how much the office of priest 48 was contended for at that time. But having received authority to deal, not with bodily leprosy, but spiritual uncleanness, not to pronounce it removed after examination, but actually and absolutely to take it away. Wherefore they who despise these priests would be more accursed than Dathan and his company, and deserve more severe punishment. For the latter, although they had the dignity which did not belong to them, nevertheless had an excellent opinion concerning it, and this they even showed with eagerness with which they pursued it; but these men, when the office has been better regulated, and receives so great a development, have displayed an audacity which exceeds that of the others, although manifestly contrary way. For there is not an equal amount of contempt involved in aiming at an honor which does not pertain and in despising such great advantages, but the latter exceeds the former as much as scorn differs from admiration. So then is so sordid as to despise such great advantages? None whatever, I should say, unless it were one of some demoniacal impulse. For I return once more to the point from which I started: not in the way of chastising but also in the way of benefiting, God has bestowed a power on priests greater than that of our natural parents indeed differ as much as the present and the future life. For our natural parents generate us unto this life only, the others unto that which is to come. And the former would not be able to avert death from their offspring, or to the assaults of disease; but these others have often saved a sick soul, or one which was on the point of perishing procuring for some a milder chastisement, and preventing others from falling altogether, not only by instruction and admonition, but also by the assistance wrought through prayers. For not only at the time of regeneration, but also, they have authority to forgive sins. Is any sick among you? it is said, let him call for the elders of the Church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall heal the sick, and the Lord will raise him up: and if he have committed sins

they shall be forgiven him. 9696 James 15. Again: our
 natural parents, should their children come into conflict with any men of high rank and
 great power, the world, are unable to profit them: but priests have reconciled, not rulers
 and kings, but God Himself when He has often been provoked against them. Well!
 after this will anyone venture to condemn me for arrogance? For after what has
 been said, I imagine such religious fear will possess the souls of the hearers that they
 will not only condemn those who avoid the office for arrogance and temerity,
 but rather those who voluntarily come forward eager to obtain this dignity for
 themselves. For if they who have been entrusted with the command of cities,
 should chance to be wanting in discretion and vigilance, have sometimes destroyed the cities
 and ruined themselves, how much power think you both in himself
 and from above must he need, to avoid sinning, whose business it is
 the Bride of Christ? 7. No man loved Christ more than Paul: no man exhibited
 greater zeal, no man was counted more grace: nevertheless, after all these
 great advantages, he still has fears and tremblings concerning this go and those who
 were governed by him. If fear, he says, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled
 Eve through subtlety, so your mind should be corrupted from the simplicity which is
 in Christ. 97972 Cor. xi. 3. And again, with you in fear and in much trembling; 9898 1
 Cor. ii. 3. and this was a man who had been caught up to the third Heaven,
 and made partaker of the unspeakable mysteries of God, 99992 Cor. xii. 4.
 and had endured as many had lived days after he became a
 believer, a man, moreover, who would not use the authority given him from God of any of
 his converts should be offended. 1001002 Cor. xi. 9; 1 Thess. ii. 9. If, then, he who
 went beyond the order of God, and nowhere sought his own advantage, but that
 of those whom he governed, was always so full of fear, considered the greatness
 of his government, what shall our condition be who in many ways seek our own, who
 to go beyond the commandments of Christ, but for the most part transgress them?
 Who is weak, he says, and I am weak? who is offended and I burn not? 101101 2 Cor. xi.
 29. Such a one ought the priest to be, or, rather, not only: for these are small
 things, and as nothing compared with what I am about to say. And what is this? I could
 have said, that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen
 according to the flesh. 102102 R If any one can utter such a speech, if anyone has
 the soul which attains to such a prayer, he might justly be liable to flight: but if
 anyone should lack such excellence as much as I do, he would deserve to
 be hated, not avoided the office, but if he accepted of it. For if an election to
 a military dignity was the business in hand, and who had the right of conferring
 the honor were to drag forward a brazier, or a shoemaker, or some such artisan entrust
 the army to his hands, I should not praise the wretched man if he did not take to flight,
 and do all in his power to avoid plunging into such manifest trouble. If, indeed,
 it be sufficient to bear the name of pastor, and to the work in hand hap-hazard,
 and there be no danger in this, then let whoso pleases accuse me of vain glory;
 but he who undertakes this care to have much understanding,

and, before understanding, great grace, uprightness of conduct, and purity
 of life and superhuman virtue, do not deprive me of forgiveness if
 I am unwisely in vain without a cause. Moreover, if any one in charge
 of a full-sized merchantship, full of rowers, and with a costly freight, were to station me
 at the helm and bid me cross the Ægean or the Tyrrhenian sea, I should from the
 proposal at once: and if any one asked me why? I should say, Lest I should sink
 the ship. Well, where loss concerns material wealth, and the danger extends only to
 bodily death, no one will blame those who exercise prudence; but where the shipwrecked
 are destined to fall, not into the ocean, but into the abyss of fire, and the which awaits
 them is not that which severs the soul from the body, but one which together with
 this dismisses eternal punishment, shall incur your wrath and hate because I
 did not plunge headlong into so great an evil? Thus, I pray and beseech you. I know
 my own soul, how feeble and puny it is: I know the magnitude of this in the great
 difficulty of the work; for more stormy billows vex the soul of the priest than the gales
 which disturb the sea. 9. And first of all is that most terrible rock of vain glory, more
 dangerous than that of the Sirens, of which the fable-monger tells such marvellous tales:
 for many were able to sail past that and escape unscathed; but this is
 so dangerous that even now, when none necessity of any kind impels me into that abyss,
 I am unable to keep clear: but if any one were to commit this charge to me, it would
 be all the same as if he tied my hands behind and delivered me to the wild
 beasts dwelling on that rock to rend me in pieces day by day. Do
 you ask what those beasts are? They are wrath, despondency, envy, strife, slanders, accusa-
 tions, falsehood, hypocrisy, intrigues, against those who have done no
 harm, pleasure at the indecorous acts of fellow ministers, sorrow at their loss of
 praise, desire of honor (which indeed most of all drives the human soul headlong to perdition),
 doctrines devised to please, servile flatteries, ignoble fawning, contempt of the
 poor, paying court to the rich, senseless and mischievous honors, favors attended with dan-
 ger both to those who offer and those who accept them, sordid fealty to the basest of
 slaves, the abolition of plain speaking, a great affectation of humility, but banishment of
 truth, the suppression of convictions and reproofs, or rather the excessive use of them
 against the poor, while against those who are invested with power no one dares open his lips.
 For all these wild beasts, and more than these, are brethren of which I have
 spoken, and those whom they have once captured are inevitably dragged down into the
 mire of servitude that even to please women they often do many things which it is well not
 to mention. The divine law has excluded women from
 the ministry, but they endeavor to thrust themselves into it; and since they can effect
 of themselves, they do all through the agency of others; and they have become invested
 with so much power that they appoint and reject priests at
 their will: 103103 Chrysostom himself experienced the truth of this,
 for it was through the influence of Eudoxia, the wife of the
 Emperor Arcadius, that he was deposed from the See of Constantinople a thing
 in fact returned upside down, and the proverbial saying may be seen realized

Theruledleadthe rulerwouldthatitweremen who dothis instead ofwomen,
whohavenotreceivedacommissiontoteach.Whydo I forthe blessed Pauldid
notsufferthemeven tospeakintheChurch.104104 1Cor. xiv.34; 1 Tim. ii. 12.But I
hheardsomeone saythattheyhaveobtained suchalargeprivilege of freespeech,
aseventorebuke theprelaChurches,andcensurethemmoreseverely
thanmastersdotheirowndomestics. 10.And let notanyonesup subjectall
totheaforesaidcharges:forthereare some,
yeamany,whoaresuperiortotheseentanglements, ainnumberthosewho have
beencaughtbythem. Norwould Iindeedmakethepriesthoodresponsiblefor
thesesuchmadnessfromme.Formenofunderstandingdo not saythat the swordis
toblameformurder,norwinefdrunkenness,norstrength for
outrage,norcourageforfoolhardiness,buttheylaytheblame onthosewho mak
improper useofthegiftswhich havebeenbestoweduponthembyGod,
andpunishthemaccordingly.Certainthepriesthoodmay justly accuseus50ifwedo
notrightlyhandleit. For it isnot itselfacause of theevils alreadmentioned,butwe,who
asfar aslies inour powerhavedefiledit with
somanypollutions,byentrustingittocommonplace
menwhoreadilyacceptwhatisofferedthem,withouthavingfirstacquireda
knowledgeoftheirorconsideredthegravity ofthe office,
andwhentheyhaveenteredonthework,beingblindedbyinexperienceoverwhelmwithin
numerableevilsthepeoplewhohavebeencommittedto their care.This is
theverythingwhnearlyhappeninginmycase,hadnot Godspeedilydelivered
mefromthosedangers,mercifullysparinhisChownsoul. For,tell me,whence do
youthinksuchgreattroublesaregeneratedintheChurches? I,for mypart, the
onlysourceofthembetobeinconsiderateandrandomway
inwhichprelatesarechosenandappointed.ought to bethstrongestpart,that
itmaybeable toregulateandcontrolthe evilexhalations
whicharisefromrestofthebodybelow; butwhenithappens to beweakin
itself,andunabletorepelthosepestiferousattacks,becomesfeebler itselfthan itreally
is,andruins the restofthebodyas well. Andtopreventthisnow comingtopass,
Godkeptme in the positionofthefeet,whichwastherankoriginally assignedtome.
Forthereareeveryotherqualities,Basil,besidethosealready
mentioned,whichthepriestought tohave, butwhich I do notpossand,aboveall,this
one:hissoulought tobethoroughlypurged fromany lustaftertheoffice:for
ifhehappenshaveanaturalinclination for thisdignity, as
soonasheattainsitastrongerflameiskindled,and
themanbeingtakencompletelycaptivewillendureinnumerableevilsinorder tokeep
asecureholdupon it,even totheextenusingflattery,orsubmittingtosomething
baseandignoble,orexpendinglarge sumsofmoney.For Iwillnot no ofthemurders
withwhichsomehavefilledtheChurches,105105Possiblythebuilding,not thebody
ofChristiasignified:forinthecontestbetween Damasusand Ursicinusfor
theSeeofRome,A.D.367,whichChrysostom in hismind,

137 persons are said to have been slain in one of the Churches in a single day. or the desolation w^h they have brought upon cities in contending for the dignity, lest some persons should think what I say in credibly of opinion one ought to exercise so much caution in the matter, as to shun the burden of the office, 106 106 to another reading the passage must be rendered, shun the burden at the outset. and when one has entered to wait for the judgment of others should any fault be committed which warrants deposition, but to anticipate it by rejecting oneself from the dignity; for thus one might probably win mercy for himself from God: but to cling to it in defiance of propriety is to deprive oneself of all forgiveness, or rather to kindle the wrath of God, by adding an error more offensive than the first.

11. But no one will always endure the strain; for fearful, truly fearful is the eager desire after this honor. And in saying this I am not in opposition to the blessed Paul, but in complete harm with his words. For what says he? If any man desireth the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 107 107 iii. 1. Now I have not said that it is a terrible thing to desire the work, but only the authority and power. And this desire I think one ought to expel from the soul with all possible earnestness, not permitting it at the outset to be possessed by such a feeling, so that one may be able to do everything with freedom. For he who does not desire exhibited in possession of his authority, does not fear to be deposed from it, and not fearing this will be able to do everything with the freedom which becomes Christian men: whereas they who fear and tremble lest they should undergo a bitter servitude, filled with all kinds of evils, and are often compelled to offend against both God and Now the soul ought not to be affected in this way; but as in warfare we see those soldiers who are noble-spirited willingly and fall bravely, so they who have attained to this stewardship should be contented to be consecrated dignity or removed from it, as becomes Christian men, knowing that deposition of this kind brings its reward no other than the discharge of the office. For when any one suffers anything of this kind, in order to avoid submitting to something which is unbecoming or unworthy of this dignity, he procures punishment for those who wrongfully do and a greater reward for himself. Blessed, says our Lord, are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you in all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake; rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven. 108 108 Matt. v. 1. And this, indeed, is the case when anyone is expelled by those of his own rank out of envy, with a view to the favor of others, or through hatred, or from any other wrong motive: but when the lot of anyone is to experience this treatment at the hand of opponents, I do not think a word is needed to procure that they confer upon him by their wickedness. It behoves us, then, to be on the watch on all sides, and to carefully search lest any spark of this desire should be secretly smouldering somewhere. For it is much to be w^hat those who are originally free from this passion, should also be able to avoid it when they have lighted upon office. But if anyone, before he obtains the honor, ch

erishes in himself this terrible and savage monster, it is impossible to say into what a furnace he will fling himself after he has attained it. Now I possessed this desire in high degree (and do not suppose that I would divert you what was untrue in self-disparagement): and this, for other reasons, alarmed men not a little, and induced me to take flight. For just as lovers of the human person as long as they are permitted to be near the objects of their affection, suffer more severe torment from their passion when they remove as far as possible from these objects of desire, they drive away the frenzy: even so when the desire this dignity are near it, the evil becomes intolerable: but when they cease to hope for it, the desire is extinguished together with the expectation. 12. This single motive then is no slight one: and even taken by itself would have sufficed to deter me from this dignity: but, as it is, another must be added not less than the former. What is this? A priest ought to be sober minded, and penetrating in discernment, and possessed of innumerable every direction, as one who lives not for himself alone but for so great a multitude. But that I am sluggish and so scarcely able to bring about my own salvation, even you yourself would admit, who out of love to me art so eager to conceal my faults. Talk not to me in this connexion of fasting, and watching, or sleeping on the ground or other hard discipline of the body: for you know how defective I am in these matters: and even if they had been practised by me they could not with my presents sluggishness have been of any service to me with a view to this authority. Such things might be of great service to a man who was shut up in a cell, and caring only for his own concerns: but when a man is divided among so great a multitude, and enters separately into the private cares of those who are under his direction, what appreciable help can be given to their improvement unless he possesses an exceedingly vigorous character? 13. And do not be surprised if, in connexion with such endurance, I seek not fortitude in the soul. For to be indifferent to food and drink and a soft bed, we see is to many no hard task, especially at least to such as are of a rough habit of life and have been brought up in this way from early youth to many others also; bodily discipline and custom softening the severity of these laborious practices: but insult, abuse, and coarse language, and gibes from inferiors, whether wanted only or justly uttered, and rebukes vainly spoken both by rulers and the ruled this is what few can bear, in fact only one or two here and there; and one man, who is strong in the former exercises, so completely upset by these things, as to become more furious than most savage beasts. Now such men especially we should exclude from the precincts of the priesthood. For if a man loathe food, or go barefoot, no harm would be done to the common interests of the Church; but a furious man causes great disasters both to him who possesses it, and to his neighbours. And there is no divine threat against those who fail to do the things referred to, but hell and hell-fire are threatened against those who are angry without a cause. 109109 Matt. v. 22. As then the lover of vain glory, when he takes upon himself the government of numbers adds additional fuel to the fire, so

he who by himself, or in the company of a few, is unable to control his anger, but readily carries away by it, should he be entrusted with the direction of a whole multitude, like some wild beast gone all sides by countless tormentors, would never be able to live in tranquillity himself, and would cause innumerable mischief to those who have been committed to his charge. 14. For nothing clouds the purity of the reason, and perspicuity of the mental visions so much as undisciplined wrath, rushing along with violent impetuosity. For we say one, destroy seven the prudent. 110110 Prov. xv. 1, the Septuagint Version. For the eye of the soul being in a nocturnal battle is not able to distinguish friends from foes, nor the honorable from the unworthy, but handles them all in turn in the same way; even if some harm must be suffered, readily enduring everything, in order to satisfy the pleasure of the soul. For the fire of wrath is a kind of pleasure, and tyrannizes over the soul more than pleasure, completely upsetting its healthy organization. For it easily impels to arrogance, and unseemly enmities, and unreasonable hatred, and it continually makes them ready to commit wanton and vain offences; them to say and do many other things of that kind, the soul being swept along by the rush of passion, and having in which to fasten its strength and resist so great an impulse. Basil: I will not endure this irony of yours any longer for who knows not how far removed you are from this infirmity? 52 Chrysostom: Why then, my good friend, do you bring me near the prey, and to provoke the wild beast when he is tranquil? Are you not aware that I have achieved this condition, not by any innate virtue, but by my love of retirement? and that when one who is so constituted remains contented by himself, or only associates with one or two friends, he is able to escape the fire which arises from passion, but not if he has plunged into the abyss of all these cares? for then he drags not only himself but man with him to the brink of destruction, and renders them more indifferent to all consideration for mildness. For the people under government are generally inclined to regard the manners of those who govern as a kind of model to assimilate themselves to them. How then could anyone put a stop to their fury when he is swelling himself? And who among the multitude would straightway desire to become moderate when he sees the ruler irritable quite impossible for the defect of priests to be concealed, but even trifling oneness speedily becomes manifest. So the athlete, as long as he remains at home, and contends with no one, can dissemble his weakness even if it be true but when he strips for the contest he is easily detected. And thus for some who live in private and in a quiet life their isolation serves as a veil to hide their defects; but when they have been brought into public they are compelled to divest themselves of this mantle of seclusion, and to lay bare their souls to all through their visible movement therefore their right deeds profit many, by provoking them to equal zeal, so their shortcomings make men more indifferent to the practice of virtue, and encourage them to indolence in their endeavours after what is excellent. Wherefore his soul ought to gleam with beauty on every side, that it may be able to gladden and to enlighten those who behold it. For the fault of ordinary men, being committed as it were in the dark, ruins only those who practise them: but the error of a man in a conspicuous position, and known to many, inflicts a common injury rendering those who have fallen more supine in their efforts for good, and driving to desperation those who wish to heed to themselves. And apart from these things, the faults of insignificant men,

even if they are exposed, in flict injury worth speaking of upon anyone: but they who occupy
 the highest seat of honor are in the first place plain visible
 to all, and if they err in the smallest matter these trifles seem great to others: for all men meas-
 ure them not by the magnitude of the offence, but by the rank of the offender. Thus the priest
 ought to be protected on any kind of adamantine armour, by intense earnestness, and per-
 petual watchfulness concerning his manners, so that if anyone discovers an exposed and negle-
 cted spot should inflict a deadly wound: for all who surround him as mice and overthrow him:
 not enemies only and adversaries, but many even of those who profess friendship. There-
 fore of men elected to the priesthood ought to be endowed with such power as the grace of God
 bestowed on those saints who were cast into the Babylonian furnace. 111111 Dan. iii. Fagg
 ot and pitch and tow are not this fire, but things far more dreadful: for it is no material fire to
 which they are subjected, but the all-devouring flame of envy encompasses them, rising up
 on every side, and assailing them, and putting their life to a more test than the fire then was
 to the bodies of those young men. When then it finds a little trace of stubble, its speed fast ensu-
 pon it; and this unsound part it entirely consumes, but
 all the rest of the fabric, even if it be brighter than the sun beams, is scorched and blackened by
 the smoke. For as long as the life of the priest is well regulated in direction, it is invulnerable
 to plots; but if he happen to overlook some trifles, as is natural in a human being, traversing the
 treacherous ocean of this life, none of his other good deeds are
 of any avail in enabling him to the mouth of his accusers; but that little blunder overshadows
 all the rest. And all men are ready to pass judgment on the priest as if
 he was not a being clothed with flesh, or one who inherits a human nature, but like an angel,
 a man emancipated from every species of infirmity. And just as all men fear and flatter a tyrant as
 long as he is strong because they cannot put him down, but when they see his affairs going ad-
 versely, those who were his friends before abandon their hypocritical respect, and suddenly
 become his enemies and antagonists, and having discovered his weak points, make an attack up-
 on him, and depose him from the government; so is it also in the case of priests. Those who honor-
 ed him and paid court to him a short time before, while he was strong, as soon as they have lit-
 tle handle eagerly prepare to depose him, not as a tyrant only, but something far more dread-
 ful than that. And tyrants fear their bodyguards, so also does the priest dread most of all his nei-
 ghbours and fellow-ministers. For others covet his dignity so much, or know his affairs so well
 as these; and if anything occurs, being near at hand they perceive it before others, and even if
 they slander him, can easily command belief, and, by magnifying trifles take their victim capt-
 ive. For the apostolic saying is reversed, whether one member suffers, all the members suffer;
 or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it; 1121121 Cor. xii. 26. unless inde-
 ed a man should by his great discretion stand his ground against everything. Are you then
 sending me forth into so great a warfare? and did you think that my soul would be equal to a
 contest so various in character and shape? Whence learn this, and from whom? If God certifi-
 ed this to you, show me the oracle, and obey; but if you cannot, and if your judgment from hu-
 man opinion only, please to set yourself free from this delusion. For in what concerns man's af-
 fairs it is fairer to trust me than others; inasmuch as no man knoweth the things of a man, save the
 spirit of man which is in him. 1131131 Cor. ii. 11. That I should have made myself and my elect

ors ridiculous, had I accepted office, and should with great loss have returned to this condition of life in which I now am, I trust I have now convinced you by these remarks, if not before. For not malice only, but something much stronger than lust after dignity is wont to arm many against one who possesses it. And just as avaricious children are oppressed by those of their parents, so some of these, when they see the priestly office held by anyone for a protracted time in which would be wickedness to destroy him, hasten to depose him from it, being all desirous to take his place, and each expecting that the dignity will be transferred to himself. 15. Would you like me to show you yet another phase of strife, charged with innumerable dangers? Come, then, and take a peep at the public festivals when it is general custom for election to be made to ecclesiastical dignities, and you will then see the priest assailed with accusations as numerous as the people whom he rules. For all who have the privilege of conferring the honor are then split into parties; and one can never find the council of elders. 11 14 11 14 It is not possible to say precisely who the electors, bishops and priests were at this time, but probably a mixed body of the clergy and laymen of the diocese. Chrysostom calls the electors fathers, i. ch. 6, and great men, ch. 7, and here he speaks of a council of elders, which means the whole body of clergy of the second order, or a select body of laymen, or possibly the two combined. Or, other, during the first five centuries, the people certainly had a considerable voice in the election of bishops. Socrates, the historian, vi. c. 2, says that Chrysostom himself was chosen for the See of Constantinople by the vote of all, clergy and people. Pope Leo (A.D. 440-461) lays down the rule that when the election of a bishop had to be preferred who is demanded by the unanimous consent of clergy and people. Epist. 84. A. A. Emperor Justinian restricted the right of election to the clergy and the optimates or people of chief rank. Of one mind with each other, or about them, and who has won the prelacy; but each stands apart from the others, one of this man, another of that. Now the reason is that they do not all look to one thing, which ought to be the only object in view, the excellence of the character; but other qualifications are alleged as recommending to that honor; for instance, of one it is said, let him be elected because he belongs to an illustrious family, of another because he possessed great wealth, and would not need to be supported out of the revenues of the Church, of a third because he has come over from the camp of the adversary; one is eager to give the preference to a man who is on terms with himself, another to the man who is related to him by birth, a third to the flatterer, but no one will look to the man who is really qualified, or make some test of his character. Now I am so far from thinking these things strict criteria of a man's fitness for the priesthood, that even if anyone manifested great piety, which is no small help to the discharge of that office, I should not venture to approve him on that account alone, unless he happened to good abilities with his piety. For I know many men who have exercised perpetual restraint upon themselves, and themselves with fastings, who, as long as they were suffered to be alone, and attend to their own concerns, have been acceptable to God, and day by day have made no small addition to this kind of learning; but as soon as they entered public life, and were compelled to correct the ignorance of the multitude, have, some of them, proved from their incompetence for so great a task, and others when forced to persevere in it, have abandoned their former strict living, and thus inflicted great injury on themselves without profiting others at all. And if anyone spent his whole lifetime in the lowest rank of the ministry, and reached extreme old age, I would not, merely out of

everence for years, promote him to the higher dignity; for what if, after arriving at that time of life, he should still remain unfit for the office? And I say this now, not as wishing to dishonour the grey head, nor as laying down a law absolute to exclude from this authority those who come from the monastic circle (for there are instances of many who issue from that body, having shone conspicuously in this dignity); but the point which I am anxious to prove is, that if neither piety of itself, nor advanced age, would suffice to show that a man who had obtained the priesthood really deserves the reasons formerly alleged would scarcely effect this. There are also men who bring forward other pretexts⁵⁴ absurd; for some are enrolled in the ranks of the clergy, that they may not range themselves among opponents on account of their evil disposition, lest they should do great mischief if they are overlooked. Could any be more contrary to right rule than this? that bad men, laden with iniquity, should be courted on account of those things for which they ought to be punished, and ascend to the priestly dignity on account of things for which they should be barred from the very threshold of the Church. Tell me, then, shall we seek any further the cause of God when we expose things so holy and awful to be defiled by men who are either wicked or worthless? for when entrusted with the administration of things which are not at all suitable to them, and others of things which exceed their natural power, they make the condition of the Church like that of Euripus.¹¹⁵¹¹⁵ A narrow strait between island of Euba and the mainland of Greece, in which the tide was very rapid. Hence the condition of Euripus proverbial expression indicative of agitation and fluctuation. Now formerly used to describe secular rulers, because the distribution of their honour they are not guided by considerations of moral excellence, but of wealth, and seniority, and human distinction; but when I heard that this kind of folly had forced its way into our affairs also, no longer regarded their conduct as so atrocious. For what wonder is it that worldly men, who love the praise of multitude, and do everything for the sake of gain, should commit these sins, when those who affect at least to be free from all these influences are in nowise better disposed than they, but although engaged in a contest for heavenly things, act as if the questions submitted for decision were on which concerned acres of land, or something else kind? for they take common places men off-hand, and set them to preside over those things, for the sake of which the begotten Son of God did not refuse to empty Himself of His glory and become man, and take the form of a servant upon, and buffeted, and die a death of reproach in the flesh. Nor do they stop even here, but add to these others still more monstrous; for not only do they elect unworthy men, but actually expel those who are well qualified as if it were necessary to ruin the safety of the Church on both sides, or as if the former provocation were not sufficient to kindle the wrath of God, they have contrived yet another not less pernicious. For I consider it as atrocious to expel the useful men as to force in the useless. And this in fact takes place, so that the flock of Christ is unable to find consolation in any direction, or draw its breath freely. Now do not such deeds deserve to be punished by ten thousand thunder-bolts, and a hell-fire hotter than that with which we are threatened [in Holy Scripture]? these monstrous evils are borne with by Him who will not the death of a sinner, that he may be converted. And how can ones sufficiently marvel at His loving kindness, and be amazed at His mercy? They who belong to the property of Christ more than enemies and adversaries, yet the good Lord still deals gently with them, and to repentance. Glory be to Thee, O Lord! Glory to Thee! How vast is the depth of Thy loving kindness! how great is the

es of Thy forbearance! Men who on account of Thy name have risen from insignificance and obscurity to po honor and distinction, use the honor they enjoy against Him who has bestowed it, do deeds of outrageous and insulting things, rejecting and expelling men of zeal in order that the wicked may ruin everything at their pleasure in much security, and with the utmost fearlessness. And if you would know the causes of this dreadful evil, you find that they are similar to those which were mentioned before; for they have one root and mother, so to say envy; but this is manifested in several different forms. For one we are told is to be struck out of the list of candidates, because he is young; another because he does not know how to flatter; a third because he has offends such a person; a fourth lest such a man should be pained at seeing one whom he has presented this man elected; a fifth because he is kind and gentle; a sixth because he is formidable to the sinful; a seventh some other like reason; for they are able to find as many pretexts as they want, and can even make the affairs of a man's wealth an objection when they have no other. Indeed they would be capable of discovering other remedies as they wish, why a man ought not to be brought suddenly to this honor, but gently and gradually. And I like to ask the question, What, then, is the prelate to do, who has to contend with such blasts? How shall he hold ground against such billows? How shall he repel all these assaults? For if he manages the business of elections. Chrysostom seems to have passed on from the election of bishops to the consideration of election to clerical offices over which the bishop had to preside. upon upright principles, all those who are enemies and adversaries both to him and to the candidates do everything with a view to contention, provoking daily strife heaping infinite scorn upon the candidates, until they have got them struck off the list, or have introduced the favorites. In fact it is just as if some pirate had sailed with him in his ship, perpetually plotting every hour against him, and the sailors, and marines. And if he should prefer favor with such men to his own salvation, a unworthy candidate, he will have God for his enemy in their stead; and what could be more dreadful than that his relations with them will be more embarrassing than formerly, as they will all combine with each other, and become more powerful than before. For as when fierce winds coming from opposite directions clash with one another, hitherto calm, become suddenly furious and raise its crested waves, destroying those who are sailing so also when the Church has admitted corrupt men, its once tranquil surface is covered with rough surf and shipwrecks. 16. Consider, then, what kind of man he ought to be who is to hold out against such a tempest, a skillful yet such great hindrance to the common welfare; for he ought to be dignified yet free from arrogance, for yet kind, apt to command yet sociable, impartial yet courteous, humble yet not servile, strong yet gentle, in order he may contend successfully against all these difficulties. And he ought to bring forward with great authority the who is properly qualified for the office, even if all should oppose him, and with the same authority to reject them who is not so qualified, even if all should conspire in his favor, and to keep one aim only in view, the building up the Church, in nothing actuated either by enmity or favor. Well, do you now think that I acted reasonably in the ministry of this office? But I have not even yet gone through all my reasons with you; for I have some other to mention. And do not grow impatient of listening to a friendly and sincere man, who wishes to clear himself from accusations; for these statements are not only serviceable for the defence which you have to make on my behalf will also prove of no small help for

the due administration of the office. For it is necessary for one who is going enter upon this path of life to investigate all matters thoroughly well, before he set his hand to the ministry. Do ask why? Because one who knows all things clearly will have this advantage, if no other, that he will not feel stung when these things befall him. Would you like me then to approach the question of superintending widows, first of the care of virgins, or the difficulty of the judicial function. For in each of these cases there is a different kind of anxiety, and the fear is greater than the anxiety. Now in the first place, to start from that subject which seems simpler than the others, the charge of widows appears to cause anxiety to those who take care of them only the expenditure of money is concerned; but the case is otherwise, and here also a careful scrutiny is needed, what to be enrolled, 117117 That is, put upon the Church-roll. From apostolic times as we know from 1 Tim. v the Church had recognized the care of widows as a duty; but to be exercised with caution, lest unworthy persons should take advantage of it. In Chrysostom's time there was an order of widows, which had departed very much from its primitive simplicity and devotion to religious works which distinguished the order of earlier days. The Church then encouraged abstinence from a second marriage: and many women seem to have taken a vow of widowhood, ain the Church-roll, only in the hope of throwing a decent veil over an irreligious, if not immoral life. For in finite mischief has been caused by putting them on the list without due discrimination. For they have ruined household marriages, and have often been detected in thieving and pilfering and unseemly deeds of that kind. Now women should be supported out of the Church's revenues provokes punishment from God, and extreme censure and abate the zeal of those who wish to do good. For who would ever choose to expend the wealth which he gives to Christ upon those who defame the name of Christ? For these reasons a strict and accurate scrutiny may be made so as to prevent the supply of the indigent being wasted, not only by the women already mentioned, but those who are able to provide for themselves. And this scrutiny is succeeded by no small anxiety of another kind ensure an abundant and unfailing stream of supply as from a fountain; for compulsory poverty is an insatiable evil, querulous and ungrateful. And great discretion and great zeal is required so as to stop them out of compounding with them of every excuse. Now most men, when they see any one superior to the love of money, forthwith as well qualified for this stewardship. But I do not think that his greatness of soul is ever sufficient of itself, although it ought to be possessed prior to all other qualities; for without this a man would be a destroyer rather a protector, a wolf instead of a shepherd; nevertheless, combined with this, the possession of another quality should be demanded. And this quality is forbearance, the cause of all good things in men, impelling as it were conducting the soul into a serene heaven. For widows are a class who, both on account of their poverty, their natural disposition, indulge in unlimited freedom of speech (so I had best call it); and they make an unseemly clamor and idle complaints and lamentations about matters for which they ought to be grateful, and bring accusations concerning things which they ought contentedly to accept. Now the superintendents should endure all these things generously, and not be provoked either by their unreasonable annoyance or their unreasonable complaints class of persons deserve to be pitied for their misfortunes, not to be insulted; and to trample upon their calamity and add the pain of insult to that which poverty brings, would be an act of extreme brutality. On this account on the wisest of men, having regard to the avari

ce and pride of human nature, and considering the nature of poverty terrible power to depress even the noblest character, and induce it oft to act in these same respects without in order that a man should not be irritated when accused, nor be provoked by continual importunity to become where he ought to bring aid, he instructs him to be affable and accessible to the suppliant, saying, Incline thine ear to a poor man and give him a friendly answer with meekness. 11818 Ecclus. iv. 8. And passing by the case of success in exasperating (for what can one say to him who is overcome?), he addresses the man who is able to others in infirmity, exhorting him before he bestow his gift to correct the suppliant by the gentleness of his countenance and the mildness of his words. But if anyone, although he does not take the property (of these nevertheless load them with innumerable reproaches, and insult them, and is exasperated against them, he fails through his gift to alleviate the despondency produced by poverty, but aggravates the distress by his abuse although they may be compelled to act very shamelessly through the necessity of hunger, they are nevertheless at this compulsion. When, then, owing to the dread of famine, they are constrained to beg, and owing to their bare constraint to put off shame, and then again on account of their shamelessness are insulted, the power of despondency becoming of a complex kind, and accompanied by much gloom, settles down upon the soul. And charge of these persons sought to be so long-suffering, as not only not to increase their despondency by his fits of anger, but also to remove the greater part of it by his exhortation. For the man who has been insulted, although in the enjoyment of great abundance, does not feel the advantage of his wealth, on account of the blow which received from the insult; soon the other hand, the man who has been addressed with kindly words, and for whom has been accompanied with encouragement, exults and rejoices all the more, and the thing given becomes so through the manner in which it is offered. And this I say not of myself, but borrow from him whose precept I quote now: My son, blemish not thy good deeds, neither use uncomfortable words when thou givest anything. Shall assuage the heat? So is a word better than a gift. Lo! is not a word better than a gift? but both are with a gracious man. 11919 Ecclus. xviii. 1517. But the superintendent of these persons sought not only to be gentle and forbearing but also skillful in the management of property; for if this qualification is wanting, the affairs of the poor are again involved in the same distress. One who was entrusted not long ago with this ministry, and got together a large money, neither consumed it himself, nor expended it with a few exceptions upon those who needed it, but kept part of it buried in the earth until a season of distress occurred, when it was all surrendered into the hands of the enemy. Much forethought, therefore, is needed, that the resources of the Church should be neither overabundant nor deficient, but that all the supplies which are provided should be quickly distributed among those who require them the treasures of the Church stored up in the hearts of those who are under her rule. Moreover, in the reception of strangers, and the care of the sick, consider how great an expenditure of money is needed, and how much exadiscernment on the part of those who preside over these matters. For it is often necessary that this expenditure be even larger than that of which I spoke just now, and that he who presides over it should combine prudence with skill in the art of supply, so as to dispose the affluent to be emulous and ungrudging in their gifts, lest while providing for the relief of the sick, he should vex the souls of those who supply their wants. But earnestness and need to be displayed here in a far higher degree; for the sick are diffi-

cult creature to please, and prone to lang and unless great accuracy and care are used, even a slight oversight is enough to do the patient great mischief in the care of virgins, the fear is greater in proportion as the possession is more precious, and this flock is of a nobler character⁵⁷ than the others. Already, indeed, even into the band of these holy ones, an infinitum ber have rushed full of innumerable bad qualities; and in this case our grief is greater than in the other; for there is just the same difference between a virgin and a widow going astray, as between a free-born damsel and her hawidows, indeed, it has become a common practice to trifle, and to rail at one another, to flatter or to be impudently everywhere in public, and to perambulate the market-place. But the virgin has striven for nobler aims, as eagerly sought the highest kind of philosophy,^{120120i.e., a life of religious contemplation, not, however, as a member of a monastic community, for Chrysostom, throughout this section, appears to be speaking of the canonical or ecclesiastical virgins who were consecrated to a religious life, yet remained at home under the care of their parents (if living) or of the Church. The first notices of separate houses for women who had taken the vow of virginity are of the middle of the 4th century. St. Ambrose mentions one at Bologna. De Virg. i. 10. St. Basil is said to have founded some (see St. Gregory Naz. Orat. 47). and professes to exhibit upon earth the life which angels lead, and while the flesh proposes to do deeds which belong to the incorporeal powers. Moreover, she ought not to make numerous unnecessary journeys, neither is it permissible for her to utter idle and random words; and as for abuse and flashes should not even know them by name. On this account she needs the most careful guardianship, and the greatest assistance. For the enemy of holiness is always surprising and lying in wait for these persons, ready to devour them if she should slip and fall; many men also there are who lay snares for them; and besides all these things is the passionateness of their own human nature, so that, speaking generally, the virgin has to equip herself for two fold war, one which attacks her from without, and the other which presses upon her from within. For the servant who has the superintendence of virginity suffers great alarm, and the danger and distress is yet greater, should the things which are contrary to his wishes occur, which God forbid. For if a daughter kept in seclusion is a cause of sleeplessness to her father, his anxiety about her depriving him of sleep, where the fear is so great lest she should chideless, or pass the flower of her age (unmarried), or be hated (by her husband),^{121121 Ecclus. xlii. 9. what we suffer whose anxiety is not concerned with any of these things, but others far greater? For in this case it is not who is rejected, but Christ Himself, nor is this barrenness the subject merely of reproach, but the evil ends in the destruction of the soul; for every tree, it is said, which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.}^{122122 Matt. iii. 10.} And for one who has been repudiated by the divine Bridegroom, it is not sufficient to receive a certificate of divorce and so to depart, but she has to pay the penalty of everlasting punishment. More father according to the flesh has many things which make the custody of his daughter easy; for the mother, and a multitude of handmaids share in helping the parent to keep the maidens safe. For neither is she permitted perpetually hurrying into the market-place, nor when she does go there is she compelled to show herself to any passers-by, the evening darkness concealing one who does not wish to be seen no less than the walls of the apartment. For these things, she is relieved from every cause which might otherwise compel her to meet the gaze or anxiety about the necessities of life, nor menaces of oppressors, nor anything}

of that kind reduces her to that unfortunate necessity, her father acting in her stead in all these matters; while she herself has only one anxiety which is to avoid doing or saying anything unworthy the modest conduct which becomes her. But in the other care many things which make the custody of the virgin difficult, or rather impossible for the father; for he could not have her in his house with himself, as dwelling together in that way would be neither seemly nor safe. For even themselves should suffer no loss, but continue to preserve their innocence unsullied, they would have to give a forfeit for the souls which they have offended, just as much as if they happened to sin with one another. And it being impossible for them to live together, it is not easy to understand the movements of the character, and to suppress impulses which are ill regulated, or to train and improve those which are better ordered and tuned. Nor is it an easy matter to interfere in her habits of walking out; for her poverty and want of a guard does not permit him to become an investigator of the propriety of her conduct. For as she is compelled to manage all her affairs she has many preferences going out, if at least she is not inclined to be self-controlled. Now she who commands her to stay always at home thought to cut off these pretexts, providing for her independence in the necessities of life, and giving her some one who will see to the management of these things. He must also keep her away from funeral obsequies, and from festivals; for that artful serpent knows only too well how to scatter his poison through the medium even of good. And the maiden must be fenced on every side, and rarely go out of the house during the whole year, except when constrained by inexorable necessity. Now if anyone should say that none of these things is the proper work for a bishop to take in hand, let him be assured that the anxieties and the reasons concerning what takes place in the church have to be referred to him. And it is far more expedient that he should manage everything, and so be delivered from complaints which he must otherwise undergo on account of the faults of others, than that he should abstain from management, and then have to read being called to account for things which other men have done. Moreover these things by himself, get through them all with great ease; but he who is compelled to do it by converting one's opinion does not get relief by being saved from working single-handed, equivalent to the trouble and turn he experiences through those who oppose him and combat his decisions. However, I could not enumerate all that concerned with the care of virgins; for when they have to be entered on the list, they occasion no small trouble who is entrusted with this business. Again, the judicial department of the bishop's office involves innumerable vexations, great consumption of time, and difficulties exceeding those experienced by men whose it is to judge secular affairs; for it is a labor to discover exact justice, and when it is found, it is difficult to avoid destroying it. And not only loss of time and difficulty are incurred, but also no small danger. For often some of the weaker brethren having plunged into business, because they have not obtained patronage have made shipwreck concerning many of those who have suffered wrong, no less than those who have inflicted wrong, hate those who do not and they will not take into account either the intricacy of the matters in question, or the difficulty of the times, or the limits of sacerdotal authority, or anything of that kind; but they are merciless judges, recognizing only one kind of defence release from the evils which oppress them. And he who is unable to furnish this, although he may have innumerable excuses, will never escape their condemnation. And talking of patronage, let me disclose another fault-finding. For if the bishop does not pay around of visit every day, more even than the idler

emen about to unspeakable offence ensues. For not only the sick, but also the whole, desire to be looked after, not that piety theme to this, but rather that in most cases they pretend claim to honor and distinction. And if he should ever have to visit more constantly one of the rich and more powerful men, under the pressure of some necessity, with a common benefit of the Church, he is immediately stigmatized with a character for fawning and flattery. But speak of patronage and visiting? Formerly from their mode of accosting persons, bishops have to endure such reproaches as to be often oppressed and overwhelmed by despondency; in fact, they have also to undergo a way in which they use their eyes. For the public rigorously criticize their simple actions, taking note of the tone of their voice, the cast of their countenance, and the degree of their laughter. He laughed heartily to such a man, will say, and accosted him with a beaming face, and a clear voice, where as to me he addressed only as a light remark. And in a large assembly, if he does not turn his eyes in every direction when he is conversing, they may declare that his conduct is insulting. Who, then, unless he is exceedingly strong, could cope with so many accusations either to avoid being indited altogether, or, if he is indited, to escape? For he must either be without any accusers, or, if this is impossible, purge himself of the accusations which are brought against him; and if this is not an easy matter, as some men delight in making vain and wanton charges, he must make a brave stand and a dejection produced by these complaints. He, indeed, who is justly accused, may easily tolerate the accuser, for no bitterer accuser than a conscience; wherefore, if we are caught first by this most terrible adversary, we can endure the milder ones who are external to us. But he who has no evil thing upon his conscience, when he is an empty charge, is speedily excited to wrath, and easily sinks into dejection, unless he happens to have practised before hand how to put up with the follies of the multitude. For it is utterly impossible for one who is falsely accused without cause, and condemned, to avoid feelings of vexation and annoyance at such great injustice. And he who speaks of the distress which bishops undergo, whenever it is necessary to cut someone off from the full communion of the Church? Would indeed that the evil went no further than distress! but in fact the mischief is not trifling. For the rarest of men, if he has been punished beyond what he deserves, should experience that which was so blessed Paul and he swallowed up by so much sorrow. 1231232 Cor. ii. 7. The nicest accuracy, therefore, is in this matter also, lest what is intended to be a profitable should become to him an occasion of greater damage whatever sin he may commit after such a method of treatment, the wrath caused by each of them must be shewn by a physician whose skillfully applied his knife to the wound. What severe punishment, then, must be expected has not only to render an account of the offences which he himself has separately committed, but also incurred danger on account of the sins committed by others? For if we shudder at undergoing judgment for our own misbelieving that we shall not be able to escape the fire of the other world, what must one expect to suffer who has answer for so many others? To prove the truth of this, listen to the blessed Paul, or rather not to him, but to Christ speaking in him, when he says: Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit, for they watch for you so that shall give account. 124124 Hebrews xiii. 17. Can the dread of this threat beslight? It is impossible to say: these considerations are sufficient to convince even the most incredulous and obdurate that I did not make this under the influence of pride or vainglory, but merely out of fear for my own safety, and consideration of the greater office

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