

A Defense Against the Catholic Principle

that is, against the accusation of the Reverend Father Robert, Bishop of Avranches in which he impiously and inopportunately charges all who are eager to follow the doctrine of Christ, purified from those human inventions that conflict with it, with innovation in all things of the Church, both in doctrines and in rites, and most particularly concerning the Most Holy Eucharist.

Here you will see, Christian Reader, that we have admitted nothing whatsoever, either into the doctrine or into the rites of our churches, which does not well accord both with the writings of the orthodox Fathers and with the observance of the catholic Church.

Translated by Michael McFadden

Martin Bucer

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MARTINUS BUCERUS THEOLOGUS

B

Nasc. Selestadtj. in Alsatia.
A^o. 1491.
Ob. Cantabrigia in Anglia.
A^o. 1551. Kl. Martyr.
Crematur ibid. A^o. 1556.
Resistitur ibid. A^o. 1560.

Anne ideo Bucere alio petis grbc Britannos,
Ut cinis & cineris gloria tanta fores.

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Reverend Lord Antonio à Prato, Cardinal and Legate, Chancellor of France. Martin Bucer sends greetings.

An exceptional sharpness of intellect, a wonderful skill in handling public affairs, and above all a singular piety in your kingdom: these are attributed to you by wide consensus, not by citizens alone but also by foreigners who have had occasion to deal with you. Relying on these your outstanding gifts, and on the fact that you administer the office of Chancellor, that is, the highest guardianship of justice and equity, in this kingdom, which in many ways is today the most flourishing, and which by the title of Most Christian ought rightly to be held in the highest esteem by godly men, I have chosen you above all others to whom I might commend the defense of innocence, not mine alone but equally that of many princes and cities, and indeed of the doctrine of Christ, which we profess to be pure and undefiled.

Robert, Bishop of Avranches, born and educated in Paris, a title he has given himself, has recently published a book against us in which he accuses of extreme impiety and perversity, overwhelming with an ocean of insults and curses of every kind, all those who have nevertheless taken up nothing other than the Gospel of Christ itself, purified from those inventions of pseudo-ecclesiastics which in every way oppose it. Among these are several most illustrious and devout princes and republics celebrated for their piety and humanity. I speak of those who, before the most Serene and invincible Prince Charles V, Roman Emperor, Catholic King, and all the lords of the Holy Roman Empire, at the Diet of Augsburg, confessed this same Gospel of Christ in published writings in both languages. This bishop in that criminal little book of his attacks me in particular, hastily branding me a restorer of the Berengarian heresy and at the same time as one utterly lost in every kind of impiety and madness. He nevertheless rages most fiercely against all those who do not receive, observe, and adore all things to the very letter of the Roman Pontiff and the common run of sacrificing priests.

This bishop has taken it upon himself to harass, tear apart, and lacerate most inopportunistly all of these, myself included, with charges unheard of and most grievous to a religious mind. I have undertaken here to defend these very people, not myself, nor indeed them as such, but the cause itself, the doctrine which I together with very many others profess to be sincere and orthodox, which those princes and republics have embraced as the undoubted doctrine of Christ and set before themselves to follow. For this is the one doctrine on whose account this bishop thought fit to proceed so harshly and so recklessly against both them and me.

I am indeed an inept advocate, if you consider either my own poverty of eloquence or the greatness and well-attested religion of those on whose behalf I must speak. But since the cause itself

which is here at stake consists not in speech but in the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, which the heavenly Father is wont to hide from the wise and prudent but to reveal to τοῖς νηπίοις, that is, to those who are children and infants in the flesh, and to accomplish which God from the beginning chose not many outstanding in wisdom and eloquence but fishermen and those unskilled in speech who are regarded by this world as utter fools, I trust in the goodness and mercy of the Lord Jesus that he will not be wanting to his own cause even with me as its agent, however ill-suited I am to such an undertaking, not indeed through any lack of learning and eloquence, for such lack does least harm in this cause, indeed none at all, but through too great a weakness of faith and too great a slackening of zeal for a holier life. But since it has seemed good to him who works all things in all, and supremely well, that this bishop should challenge me by name and take upon himself to attack and accuse chiefly those things which I have written, however inelegantly yet truly and piously, to elucidate the doctrine of Christ, I have good hope that he has in this cause also chosen the foolishness of the world to confound those who think themselves wise, and the weak to put the strong to shame.

For I too know, whatever I am, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ in whom I have believed, that I have known his doctrine to which I have devoted myself. I am certain that in administering it I seek this: that he himself may reign as widely as possible, that is, that we may experience him as Savior in ever greater numbers. He will therefore, according to his promise, so much the more graciously breathe his Spirit upon this work in proportion as I am less able to avail myself of other helps, that Spirit which in this defense may so enlighten the mind, supply fitting words, and guide and govern all things, so that those who are eager to do the will of the Father, who seek the things of Christ and not their own, who are capable of judging rightly concerning the doctrine of Christ, will understand without any difficulty, however unskilled and unfit I may be for the task, that those whom this bishop, amid his smallest insults and curses, calls madmen, ruined by impious teachings, heretics, deserters and enemies of the Church of Christ, acknowledge, profess, and follow nothing other than those dogmas of Christ which the holy Church of Christ has taught from its earliest age, which no one who wishes to be considered a Christian fails to profess, which are so clearly present in the sacred Scriptures themselves that they are well-known even to children rightly instructed in the orthodox faith.

Since our situation is thus, the less resource there is and the less confidence outside the cause and favor of our Lord Jesus Christ, so much the more goodwill will those who wish to belong to Christ owe me. Our adversary is by rank and origin a Parisian, that is, as I understand this title with which he has distinguished himself, both born and educated in Paris. This city for several centuries now is believed by many to be what Athens once was, or even Jerusalem. For the theologians who reign there claim the highest authority in sacred learning and demand to be regarded as the guardians of the law and Areopagites of the Christian commonwealth. To these titles, by no means empty for many, is added the almost venerable bishop's mitre. And as if all this were not enough, the Roman and Supreme Pontiff, the other chief heads of the churches, especially kings and princes, and to put it in a word, all who seek the kisses of the feet of the supreme pontiff, which is indeed a countless multitude, are nearly of one mind: that whatever the Parisian theologians have branded with terror in

their books or doctrine, they hold to be straightway and certainly condemned, and consider it a crime if anyone should think of defending what they have defamed.

We on the other hand, the Lord so willing, have come together with his Apostles, however much inferior to them in faith and innocence, to be the offscouring of the world and the refuse of all things, and through the actions of certain men who have sought their own profit and glorious titles at the most grievous cost to the churches and the truest disgrace of their bishops, we have arrived at such a point that the greater part of mankind, as soon as they hear our name, think they must stop both their ears, and consider the very sky infected by our faith. They regard us as fit only to be accused, condemned, and destroyed by all, with none to hear us, none to defend us, none to plead our innocence.

You see, most prudent sir, how unequally we are situated: our accuser so universally favored, supported by such great authority among men, relying on such great prejudices against us, while we are not even defendants in a case to be retried but condemned before we are accused. So great a part of the world judges us unworthy even of a hearing; indeed, we have long been regarded by very many as accursed and infamous. But you experience daily the perversity of men and their readiness both to believe and to fabricate calumnies, and you have so clearly seen the sanctimony of both the theological and ecclesiastical orders, that you cannot doubt it would be most unjust if anyone, on the accusation of these men, should think such illustrious princes and republics ought to be condemned unheard and undefended or excluded from a defense.

For who that is truly devoted to Christ does not know what the nature of piety is and what is the lot of Christ in this age: that in the world, which always hates God and lies wholly in evil, nothing is heard as worse, nothing incurs the hatred of men more heavily, nothing is judged more worthy of persecution and cruelty. And this not only in me and those like me, who still struggle heavily with vices and sins, but in the Lord's own most holy prophets, in the Apostles, and in the Son of God himself. And this too is well known to all true believers in Christ: that such great fury is unleashed against piety not by those who confess themselves to be of this world, but by those who are first in the kingdom of God, adored not by themselves alone but by virtually the entire world. Such certainly was the standing of those who killed the Apostles and who crucified the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is therefore a great necessity, given how things are now everywhere taught and lived even among those regarded by common opinion as the most learned and holy, to turn all attention away from the dignity of persons to the cause itself at issue, and to labor above all in this if in any other matter, to gather and advance with greatest diligence whatever can serve it, so that what it truly deserves may at last be fully known. At stake here are not the wealth of many, not reputation, not even bodily life, but the powers of the blessed life, the name written in heaven, eternal life itself. So too have errors crept into every part of mortal life, such darkness has prevailed, and everything has been so thoroughly leavened, confused, and thrown into disorder, that no adviser whatsoever ought to be despised. When a ship is in supreme peril, who is not called into counsel? In desperate

circumstances of death, who is not asked for a remedy? In warfare, when things are desperate, what soldier is so common, what recruit so raw, that even the highest commanders would disdain him as an adviser?

Therefore let the cause of piety itself and its nature, these stains and corruptions so openly manifest even in the highest orders of the Church, the so pitiable ruin and danger of true religion everywhere in this fierce contest of doctrines, and finally what you read here, however unpolished yet of undoubted truth, move you as both Chancellor and Cardinal to strive to obtain for us in your France, which for many centuries has enjoyed the highest reputation for religion and equity, that which is denied to none, even those caught red-handed in the most extreme crimes, even among the most barbarous nations: namely, that our defense against these dreadful and no less false accusations of this bishop may be publicly read.

For what would be more unjust, what more foreign to the glories of France, what more unworthy of the title of the Most Christian King, than to allow this bishop to attack so many princes and republics who adore the same Christ and are therefore brothers to you in heavenly kinship, and moreover fellow members of civil society and alliance, for the Most Christian King calls these princes and republics his friends and allies, with accusations of such a kind that none more destructive or atrocious could even be imagined, and to do so before the judgment not only of France but of all Europe, with such supreme and incomparable ferocity and so far removed from all truth, indeed from any appearance of truth, while to those very brothers, fellow members, friends, and allies, the place of a defense so truly and so religiously necessary is denied.

If in this defense we have mingled anything vain or impious, we call down upon ourselves that God may exact punishment for faithlessness committed in a cause not our own but his, than which nothing is more severely to be avenged, and make us an example to the whole world of acting truthfully in the cause of truth and of mingling nothing profane in the matter of religion.

And lest you lack just caution, we do not ask that this our defense go before the public without first being examined and tested by men truly godly and capable of judging in these matters, as that most cruel and impious accusation of the bishop burst forth. Let it first be read and judged by the most learned men, those who have some fear of God, among whom some zeal for God prevails, who have some judgment in the things of Christ, who do not themselves testify by their whole manner of life that they not only ignore the things of God but cannot even bear them, being bound to that way of living which everyone can see is in every way contrary and opposed to the precepts of Christ. But when you have seen that nothing here is said contrary to the mind of our Lord Christ, that nothing is set forth that is not sincere and genuinely Christian, and that those things which are perhaps still disputed by some are proposed with such modesty and weighed with such religious care that no one is not invited thereby to the simplest knowledge of Christ, and when you have judged that it can be read not only without harm but with a certain increase of piety by the good and godly in general, then we beg you with all our strength to ensure that it not be shut away from the public nor forbidden to be read by good men, doing thereby without doubt what you owe to Christ the Lord,

who will himself deny before his Father whoever has not acknowledged and honored him even in the least of his, those who in this age are of no account.

You owe this to the equity impressed upon the minds of all people, which in this matter inclines even more favor toward the accused than to the accuser. You owe it to the name and reputation of the Most Christian King, to whom nothing more unworthy or equally shameful could happen than that friends and allies should be driven from a defense in his kingdom, and those attacked with so savage and inopportune, and no less fabricated and lying, an accusation, in a cause of religion than which none can be greater. You owe it to your own dignity and the splendor of so excellent an office. You owe it finally to humanity itself, which considers nothing human foreign to it, and will surely not think it right to neglect the reputation and safety of so many princes and cities, which this bishop brings into the gravest peril.

And when I so often remind you that I do not allow this to be my own private cause but make it, as it truly is, the cause of so many, do not on that account suspect that I am asking you to give weight to numbers, as I have acknowledged that the worse side is generally followed by the greater multitude, or that distrusting the cause I seek refuge in a crowd of fellow wanderers, or that I desire the splendor of great names to dazzle your eyes and hide my acknowledged impiety. This very Defense will assure you that I hold, teach, and admit nothing that is not as openly contained in the divine Scriptures as it has been plainly confessed in published writings in both languages by those princes and cities who today among the Germans have passed from the traditions of the Pontiff to a purer observance of Christianity.

Truly therefore I have undertaken to defend not so much my own cause as the cause of all of these. There is one faith, the same conviction concerning religion, a common peril. If it is already abominable for even the most abject person to be wronged, what ought it to be when so many are assailed with such intolerable injuries and calumnies, and among them not a few whom the Lord has raised to such a place that they have brought and continue to bring the greatest benefits to mankind. I would wish this to be impressed upon the nobles of France through you, that they may at last admit a just hearing of our cause, and no longer be satisfied with our condemnation unheard and without trial by those whom they can plainly see are strangers to the kingdom and pursuit of Christ.

We invoke the same Christ: that therefore what the true and genuine religion of Christ is may at last be firmly known by all, nothing is not to be attempted, nothing not to be undertaken, at least by those who truly pursue Christ. We have in no way departed from you or from other orthodox believers in the things of Christ, in that which the enemies of true Christianity most falsely charge against us. Only the vices and corruptions which they have inflicted upon the churches and upon the whole administration of the sacred mysteries, which no good man does not deplore, we in no way endeavor to pull away from what has been rightly and in order established in the church. We seek a council, a remedy restored to its former manner and true procedure, which all good men have implored with us for so many centuries now, but still in vain. That you therefore apply yourselves to this, that provision might at some point be made for a grave and serious restoration of the Church's

affairs, so miserably collapsed, is what we seek, what we strive for, what we aim at above all in this defense.

But what concern for this could move you or others, if those who are guardians of the churches in title only, entrusted with the sum of ecclesiastical affairs, are yourselves secure about the whole constitution of the Christian order, and meanwhile you allow those most unjust prejudices of the pseudo-theologians and bishops against us to prevail to such a degree that to have known our cause counts as a mark of impiety, and it has become the persuasion of the common people and of all the nobles and princes alike that a few obscure and insignificant little men, crazed with the frenzy of impiety, are subverting by impious and insane inventions whatever has been rightly and in order established in the Church, and waging war with satanic audacity against God himself, against the heavenly host, and against all men on earth, as this bishop cries without end or measure? The very nature of piety compels us to leave nothing untried by which we may stir up good and godly men, who are altogether entitled by every reasonable means, to bring it about that it may be publicly known what those things are which we have received in the name of the doctrine of Christ, what that innovation in religion is of which so many accuse us. For among all sensible people it carries great weight toward willingness to examine a matter, if they see it to be of concern to many good people, and if they observe that it touches a great number of distinguished and eminent men.

And this, most excellent sir, is the sole reason why this defense which I have undertaken is not that of a few or of common people, and why it seemed worth recalling so carefully how widely this cause which I have taken up extends and how many it touches. Do therefore what you owe to Christ the Lord in every respect, and what you owe to so great a part of Germany. Do what this office from which it falls upon you above all to stand by those laboring in a good cause requires of you. See to it that access to knowledge of good things in France be open for those things which I shall bring forward with the simplest truth in all respects, relying upon and using it, on behalf of the religion of Christ itself and the innocence of so many, whom no one endowed with the Spirit of Christ, if he knew them, would not hold in esteem, to say nothing of admitting them to a defense so godly and so necessary.

The Most Christian King has not yet allowed himself to be brought to ratify our condemnation or make himself the executor of it without a legitimate examination of our whole cause, however much those who think they can command him anything by their own authority have tried to extort this from him. And it is reported that of his own nature he detests all those who dare to assail anyone with the charge of heresy by means of these frivolous prejudices, or rather calumnies, of your theologians. From this we strengthen our hope that if you apply yourself earnestly, the king, whose nature is otherwise fair and humane, will by no means be reluctant to allow that in his kingdom, just as that most false accusation which the Bishop of Avranches wrote against his friends and allies may be read with impunity, so also the true and godly defense which I here offer on their behalf may be freely read. May the Lord grant both that he counsel you and that the king concede what shall be both to his own glory and to your salvation. Whatever may befall us will work together

for our salvation. We shall abound in safety whatever the whole world may contrive, so long as he to whom the Father has given power over all things shall be our head.

It is our duty to take care that those most holy gifts of his, even in us, may not find ill reception or contempt among you, or, to say what this bishop dares, be blasphemed and most harshly cursed. And we desire to apply our effort to this end, that when the Gospel of Christ is rightly known, all of us who are his may everywhere conspire together in him alone. Let this foundation stand: The Lord knows who are his, and let everyone who calls upon the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

I shall divide this defense as follows. Throughout his entire little book the bishop charges us with defection from the Church of Christ and with a fury aimed at overturning at once all things divine and human. This charge of secession from the body of Christ and sedition in his kingdom I shall therefore first repel, showing that we are still joined in all things with all those living in Christ, that we have withdrawn ourselves in nothing from ecclesiastical obedience, that we have impiously innovated in nothing of doctrine or rites, save in this one point alone, which is our sorrow, that we do not exhibit our life sufficiently and earnestly conformed to the commands of God, and that we in nothing depart from the institutions of Christ and the Church. As this is the chief point of the episcopal accusation, which he presses most sharply throughout all his charge, so I shall dispatch it in the first place, and shall examine whatever is now in controversy concerning the dogmas and rites of holy things, and shall explain our faith concerning them and demonstrate that it agrees with the mind of all the orthodox. Then I shall give satisfaction concerning what he specifically charges and has made the title of his accusation, branding us with the mark of impiety, not of the Berengarian heresy, as he calls it, but of one truly unheard of. In this place I shall also set forth, and with the best faith, what we hold and teach concerning this most sacred mystery of the most divine Eucharist, concerning the true presence and eating of the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the holy Supper. Here this bishop endeavors to drag us into odium by such lies and calumnies that I have read nothing more vainly, deceitfully, and cruelly written. In no passage does he cite or understand our writings as they stand, and, which you may wonder at, he has even inserted my very words into his book, yet he perverts and transforms everything, invents a great deal, and makes us the authors and defenders of things which could only have been invented by Satan himself, then rages and storms against us as convicted and manifest of all these things, so that he seems to have been trained not at the Sorbonne but among the furies themselves, and to be driven by those very furies in all his might. The third section will contain a brief reply to the infinite heap of insults and curses with which he so buries his little book that if you were to remove the insults and curses from it, what remains could easily be contained in a single quire of pages, whereas the book runs to six and a half sheets.

I shall endeavor to carry all this out in such a way as to appear mindful that I, a Christian, am writing to Christians, and am pleading the cause of Christ before their tribunal, those who from their hearts seek the glory of Christ, and not forgetful either that I have to do with an adversary who is accounted a bishop. To that name and office I shall render what I owe, so that while he himself has made it abundantly clear that he has weighed very little what becomes not merely a bishop but even a Christian man, or indeed a tolerable pagan, I on my part have never heard anything of this man, what

his character and disposition may be, what his reputation among the good. He displays a greater devotion to letters than Sorbonne theologians have been accustomed to do hitherto, yet of such a kind that you may easily recognize him as being of that order. Things slip from him now and then which seem to indicate a mind not altogether averse to solid piety, but that excessive confidence in condemning what he has not yet properly learned to know as it betrays at the same time a mind not yet sufficiently strengthened to sustain the weight of the name of theologian and the mitre of a bishop. But whatever the mind of this bishop may be, it is the Lord's to judge him; we are to estimate him by his words and deeds. And since even these are not clear to me beyond this one writing, I shall leave the whole man to be judged by the Lord and the Church, and knowing that even those whom the Lord holds singularly dear are sometimes drawn into such temptation as to pursue the things of Christ with a zeal for Christ that yet exceeds knowledge, I choose to interpret this writing of our adversary, severe and plainly inopportune as it is against us, however monstrous, in the most charitable way: to take nothing more harshly than necessary, to exaggerate nothing, and throughout all our defense to treat him as one whom we believe to be seeking the Lord and to be capable of healing. For it is not our own cause but Christ's that we plead, and we have set ourselves to serve him to this end, that he may seek and save what is lost. Our aim is not that we may be known to be innocent, but that what the true and genuine doctrine of Christ is, that certain Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes, may be made known. May the Lord himself govern and protect this our undertaking, which he has given us the heart to take up in this spirit, and grant that what we say according to his mind may be so understood and received by his own. To him be all glory and dominion. Amen. Him we earnestly pray that he may bind you wholly to himself, and make you serve his glory, which alone is the highest happiness.

Strasbourg, the seventh day before the Kalends of September, in the year 1534.

First, then, concerning the charge of heresy and defection from the Church of Christ. Since our accuser everywhere presses this against us throughout his writing in the most monstrous language, in his dedicatory epistle to the Senate and people of Rouen he commends us to the world with this tribute.

The audacity of the heretics, he says, and here this is among the milder titles with which this bishop distinguishes us, has now advanced to the point where they dare to profane all sacred things, if they can. Now they raise their crests, now the demon takes up his horns. Once the devil lay in wait as a dragon; now he has begun to roar as a lion. And after certain things: What would the raving madness of the heretics of our age not now dare, which spares neither the living nor the dead? For it strives to run through at once all those in heaven and on earth, those above and below, the living with the dead, with one sword, while it endeavors to take away suffrages for the dead, honor for those above, obedience to the Church, and all interpretation from the sacred books, worshipping, embracing, venerating, and adoring meanwhile only the dreams of its own head, and those most vain ones, confounding all things, perverting all things. Finally they mingle heaven with earth and sea

with sky. And lest they leave anything unattempted, they strive to resist God himself the Most High to his face, and are not ashamed to exchange the most sacred body of Christ for some image, as it were a certain likeness and idol, under the name of type and figure. In the end, if they are not resisted, they will bear away with them in their rush mountains and seas and lands and the deep heavens, and sweep them through the air, as the Latin Homer wrote of the unbridled fury of winds. And in the preface addressed to the Berengarians, for he makes this name peculiarly ours: But this is wonderful, and never heard in any age, that you, relying on your own rashness, the Church whose members you were being neither consulted nor heard, have attempted to tear out all its sacred rites by the roots and overthrow them utterly, without court, without tribunal, without parties, without a judge.

Thus are we treated, we who are brothers in the Lord Jesus, who are numbered among your friends and allies, and this by a bishop, who above others ought to be humane toward all, fit and zealous to teach, so disposed as to bear with the wicked and instruct them with meekness, as in 2 Timothy 2.

But perhaps he thinks himself guilty of nothing harsh or unkind when he charges us, and charges us so falsely, with profaning all sacred things, taking up the horns and fierce lion's nature of the evil demon, being rabid and raving, sparing neither the living nor the dead, striving to run through at once with one sword all those in heaven and on earth, above and below, living and dead, endeavoring to take away suffrages from the dead, honor from those above, obedience to the Church, all interpretation from the sacred writings, worshipping, embracing, venerating, and adoring meanwhile only the dreams of the head and those most vain ones, confounding all things, perverting all things, mingling heaven with earth and sea with sky, resisting God the Most High to his face, exchanging the most sacred body of Christ for some image, as it were a likeness and idol, under the name of type and figure, being driven by these furies, so that if we are not resisted, we shall in our rush carry off mountains and seas and lands and the deep heavens and sweep them through the air. For all of us are attempting to tear out by the roots all the sacred rites of the Church and to overthrow them utterly. And at the trumpet call of so religious a bishop, the whole world ought to arm itself against us, and whatever is anywhere among mortals ought to rise up to crush so great a pestilence and the Fury of all things.

But let us see whether these so unheard-of and furious curses fit us. Christians will follow their Lord. By your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned. We therefore affirm in the Lord, and all who have known our cause will attest, that all these charges are most vain and fabricated without any cause whatsoever on our part. We profane no sacred things, we seek to run through no heavenly or infernal beings with a sword, we confound or overturn nothing that is established by the Church of Christ. But whatever has been handed down by God, whatever the Church of Christ has at any time received or instituted, to this we cleave with simple heart and certain faith. And to give proof of this, we will here ourselves confess before all good men what our conviction is concerning religion in every respect, and what things we have judged to need renewal.

First, by the gift of Christ, we firmly assent to all things that the sacred canon of the divine Scriptures contains, and that in agreement with all the orthodox, every false interpretation being

utterly rejected. There is no creed received in the Church to which we do not in all things adhere. Then the dogmas of our religion handed down to us by the Council of Nicaea and other most holy synods, those ancient ones, and likewise what is read in Tertullian, Cyprian, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, Chrysostom, Cyril, Nazianzen, and whatever belongs to the fathers of the greater nations. And finally also what these men of God have written harmoniously on the sacred Scriptures, setting forth the mind of the Church therein, or rather of the Holy Spirit, all these things we hold as most sacred. But where they, being human, vary among themselves, we follow those whom it is right to acknowledge as having more certainly arrived at the true sense of the Scriptures.

Saint Augustine judged that this difference exists between canonical writings and those of others, however great their sanctity and learning may be, that to the former simple faith is to be accorded in all things, all doubt being entirely excluded, but to the latter not because they themselves have thought and taught so, but only if what they hold they shall have made persuasive either through canonical authors or through probable reason. Indeed it is permissible, saving the honor due to those men, even to disapprove and reject what they say, if we chance to find that the truth, understood by divine assistance, has been otherwise perceived either by others or by ourselves. This truly divine judgment has been so received that it has been inserted in the Pontifical Decrees, Distinction 9. Who therefore among godly men would find fault with us for following this?

Now I would have this bishop and theologian define what the right and catholic faith is, of what articles it consists, and finally what makes a heretic. The Scholastics define one who believes rightly as he who firmly assents to those things revealed to us in the Scriptures. A heretic they define as one who pertinaciously denies any of these or asserts what conflicts with them. Saint Augustine adds, for the sake of some temporal advantage, and especially of glory and power, in his book on the usefulness of believing. And everyone acknowledges that the sacred Scripture is so the rule of faith that no authority, no reason, no custom, no observance can rightly avail against it rightly understood. And it is acknowledged that the Scripture has been rightly understood from those earliest holy fathers, Cyprian, Hilary, Augustine, and the rest of that class, to the effect that those holy men both knew what things are necessary to be believed for salvation and taught them harmoniously, and I think no one will deny this.

Now if either this bishop himself or others shall have proved that we have either embraced any dogma which does not indubitably follow from the divine Scriptures rightly understood, with those writers of first authority in the Church agreeing thereto, or have introduced any rite which is not plainly proved from the Scriptures, or have certainly departed from any dogma or observance resting on the authority of Scripture, we ourselves will confess ourselves heretics, enemies and overthrowers of the Church, and whatever else this bishop however sharp and angry may wish. But if the thing itself testifies that we have admitted nothing at all either into doctrine or into rites which the divine letters do not manifestly teach, and have in no way shaken those things which rest on the authority of the Scriptures, let those to whom the religion of Christ is dear acknowledge that this bishop out of a depraved disposition and undeserved hatred of us pursues us with such great charges.

And lest I seem by this general repulsion to wish to pass over in silence those points in which we have departed from received dogmas and rites, let me go through each one honestly, in which we may appear to vary even in appearance from the doctrine and institutions commonly received.

The chief of all is the matter of justification, that is, the manner in which it can come about that a man may be secure in the divine judgment, certain of the goodwill and mercy of God, persuaded that he is held by God among the just and partakers of the blessed life, all his offenses against him having been forgiven. Scripture, by whatever word it usually renders justification for us, understands according to some to be judged, and if one is guilty, it is the same as to be absolved. In Deuteronomy 25: When a dispute arises between men and they come to judgment, they shall justify him who is just, that is, has a good cause, they shall pronounce him just, and condemn the guilty. In this sense Saint Paul uses this word when he inquires whether we are justified by faith or by works, when he writes in Romans 8: Who shall accuse the elect of God? It is God who justifies, that is, absolves them. Therefore to be justified before God is to be absolved by God from the guilt of sins and received into grace.

In order therefore that this very thing may come about for us, that is, what that is by which we may arrive at the remission of sins and reconciliation with God, that is, our justification, and become certain of it, this is the chief of all the matters in controversy between us and the Scholastic theologians. It is also the first of the questions about which all mortals are anxious. For man is so constituted, so held and agitated by the fear of divine judgment, that he can never be at peace so long as he is not certain of the goodwill and favor of God toward him. As therefore everyone feels that God hates the impious and impiety, and that whatever is done perversely is an abomination to him, so no one can be persuaded that God favors him and will give him a place among his own, unless he believes that God has forgiven him his sins and will not now impute them. Hence Paul, proving that we are justified by faith and not by works, cites that passage from Psalm 32: Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sin is covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute sin.

This certainly, to have God appeased and propitious, is the end of good things and the highest of all we seek, so that the end of evils and the last of those things we flee and turn from is to have God angry and our sins not blotted out. For what else can a man require, if he knows God, who by his nod rules and dispenses all things, to favor him and to have thought him worthy of the place and number of sons? And what addition of evils can come to him who feels God to be favorable toward him, when with God appeased all things must needs work together for good? Hence the Holy Spirit makes throughout all Scripture the first of things to be sought the persuasion of the mercy of God forgiving sins, and the first of things to be fled the feeling of the indignation of God retaining and about to avenge sins. To this our soul by its own nature gives assent, for it feels that it can now truly attain to peace of mind, enjoy solid pleasure, achieve perfect virtue, and the rest in which the error of the philosophers placed the end of good things, only if it is not in doubt of the favor of God toward it, since he by his nod administers all things, and by his gift alone both virtue itself and the remaining goods come. So also everyone experiences what it is to be sold under sin, to use Saint Paul's word,

and sees that he will arrive at no degree of virtue if it is not given him to hope that God will not impute his sins to him and will of his purely gratuitous bounty make him a partaker of the heavenly life, for he must needs utterly despair of all his happiness. There is therefore nothing further of good things that can be sought beyond the certain knowledge that God will forgive us our sins, and nothing of evils further to be feared beyond the knowledge that he will not forgive them.

Concerning the manner in which it is possible to attain this, so that we may experience God as propitious with sins abolished and as the giver of the blessed life, that is, concerning our justification, we perhaps do not agree with the Sorbonne in everything, but we do agree with the sacred letters themselves, we agree with all the orthodox fathers without exception, and we agree finally also with the sounder Scholastics.

For our faith is this: that since by nature we are all children of wrath, as in Ephesians 2, Genesis 5, Romans 3, and John 3, all whose every thought inclines from childhood to evil, since no one is not deprived of the glory of God, that is, of fellowship in the divine lot, so much so that we must be born again from above, it is not in our own powers to bring ourselves up from our innate depravity, nor in any of our works to procure for ourselves either the abolition of sins or the faculty of righteousness. Since therefore from ourselves we can do nothing but offend God, and before the grace that renews us we have only evil merits, as Saint Augustine repeatedly declares, it is necessary that God out of his own goodness remit our sins to us and grant us to be governed toward righteousness. And this he has determined to bestow upon those whom he has chosen for life, through the interceding satisfaction of our Lord Jesus Christ. Truly therefore, as Saint Paul writes, we are justified freely, by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Romans 3. We have been saved by grace through faith, and this not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them, Ephesians 2. What could be said more clearly than this, what more evidently? And who could fail to know how religiously Saint Augustine cleaves to these words, whoever has unrolled even one of the books he wrote against the Pelagians, or indeed the other books he wrote after that heresy arose? And the Scholastics follow Augustine. For the Master of the Sentences, whose commentaries are most sacred to the Scholastics, follows the faith of Saint Augustine in this point. Hence that saying tossed about in every school, that man cannot merit the first grace, and that in order to merit at all, both the preventing and the cooperating grace of God and the fixed power of the Holy Spirit are required. And indeed the Master of the Sentences, concluding in this matter, wrote that man can always both sin and not sin, that we may always confess ourselves of free will. He understood this, as he himself speaks in that very place, of the natural aptitude which the mind of man has for believing or loving, which nevertheless only by the grace of God preventing it both believes and loves. For as Saint Augustine says in the book of the sentences of Prosper, which the Master cites in this place: To be able to have faith, as to be able to have charity, is of the nature of men; but to have faith, as to have charity, is of the grace of the faithful. Therefore when the Master affirms that man can always not sin, it is nothing other than that

the nature of man is always of such a kind as is capable of the Spirit of righteousness. For he subscribes to Augustine saying: It is the will by which one both sins and lives rightly, but the will itself, unless it is freed by the grace of God from the slavery by which it was made the slave of sin, and is helped both to overcome vices and to live rightly and piously, cannot do so by mortals. Retractions, chapter 8. Thus far therefore we do not even dissent from the Scholastics who are somewhat sounder. For we too wish, avoiding the Charybdis of the Manicheans, who affirmed that man could not but sin and therefore his nature was evil, created by an evil demon, not to fall into the Scylla of the Pelagians, who against grace established the merits of the human will. Whatever a man does, we acknowledge that he does it of his own and free will, since it is in no way compelled. But toward good, so that he may will what is approved by God and is therefore right, the will is not so free, as Scripture has judged that the inclination of man toward righteousness is to be called not only a liberation from the law of sin but a regeneration and creation of a new man. Hence Augustine writes: For the mercy of God prevents the unwilling man that he may will, and follows the willing man lest he will in vain.

Concerning grace and free will, and the powers of human nature, there is nothing in which we differ from the more recent theologians. To believe and to love, and whatever good we do, is the act of the will, and of a free will, not compelled but of its own accord inclining thereto. But this will, this free and holy choice, God out of his goodness alone, moved by no good in us, gives and works in us, according to that word: It is God who works in you both to will and to accomplish, Philippians 2.

Nor is there any dispute concerning merits, for we reject none, even of eternal life, for the Lord said that whoever has left anything for his sake shall receive it a hundredfold here, and in the world to come eternal life. Reward also he not infrequently assigns by covenant. But what shall we say of merits, whether good or evil works? The evil are ours; the good God prepares in us that we may walk in them, Ephesians 2. And Augustine writing to the presbyter Sixtus, whom the Master cites in Distinction 28: What is the merit of man before grace, since all our good merit is not made in us except by grace? And Thomas Aquinas confesses that all that is good in man is from God, and that man cannot merit anything beyond what God has of his own free goodness decreed to repay for good works, and to which he himself stirs and moves us and brings it to pass. And so these works are at once our own, because we perform them by our own will, and gifts of the Lord, because they are given by his grace and brought to completion by his Spirit, who himself prepares our will and works in us both to will and to accomplish. Hence Augustine writes in the same epistle: When God crowns our merits, he crowns nothing other than his own gifts. And likewise from the sermon on the words of the Apostle, sermon 2: Even if your merits have gone before, God says to you: Examine your good merits, and you will see that they are my gifts. This is the justice of God. All these things the Master of the Sentences cites as truly and piously written, and no one among the sounder Scholastics dissents. And there is no doubt that as Saint Augustine, a writer so thoroughly catholic, teaches on these dogmas, so the Church of Christ both before and after his time has understood them. And these are the very things which we both believe and teach to others in this matter. Our adversary the bishop therefore had no cause on our part, as far as these first heads of Christian doctrine are concerned,

concerning our justification, grace, free will, and merits, to accuse us of heresy and impious innovation, let alone to do so with such ferocity.

Furthermore, we differ from the Scholastics in this: that they have devised a fixed measure both of good works and of penances by which satisfaction is made for sins, a measure which men are not only able to fulfill but even to exceed, suffering more adversities or performing more good deeds than is necessary for their own salvation. These they have called works of supererogation, and from these, combined with the merits of Christ, they have constructed a treasury of indulgences, together with satisfactions for things either wrongly done or left undone.

Here we confess that we have departed from received positions, but received positions of the school, not of the Church of Christ. These positions are not only not handed down in the divine Scriptures or in the holy fathers, but are directly contrary to them, as contrary to the whole principle of right faith as to those things commended to us by the ancients. The measure set for good works, that is, for a properly holy and well-ordered life, is the example of our Lord Jesus Christ. For to this end, that we might be conformed to the image of his only-begotten Son, God has foreknown and predestined us, Romans 8. To this Paul was straining, forgetting the things that were behind him, not yet counting himself to have attained or grasped what was set before him, Philippians 3. He was conscious of no fault in himself, and yet from this he did not dare to judge himself justified. If the Apostle, so advanced, and who without doubt as he labored more than all so he raised himself nearer than all to the prize of the heavenly calling, is found to lack the just measure of good works, who else will take upon himself to claim that he has even exceeded that measure? All the saints pray: Forgive us our debts, and acknowledge themselves unprofitable servants even when they seem to themselves to have fulfilled all that was commanded them. Who in this body of sin loves God with his whole heart and whole soul and all his strength, so that he admits nothing at all contrary to the pleasure of God and lets nothing pass, which is certainly what we owe to him who has both formed and reformed us entirely? No one therefore has ever attained to such sanctity as to have rendered what he himself owed to God, let alone to have done anything over and above.

Furthermore, whoever suffers more adversities than they demand for themselves, since all that can happen here is by no means worthy of the glory which we expect to be revealed in us, Romans 8. Momentary and light is all that we suffer here, but it works an eternal weight of glory, 2 Corinthians 4. Therefore in bearing evils, whatever the injury and however atrocious, no one fulfills even his own measure, far less does anything redound beyond it for others.

It would have been enough that these things were so clearly handed down in the divine letters, but lest we appear not to render due honor also to the interpretation of the holy fathers of the faith, let us adduce their testimonies also, and let Saint Augustine, than whom no one was more observant of the catholic doctrine, serve us as interpreter of the rest. He has left these words written on Psalm 3: Who is there that is not saved freely? In whom the Savior finds not what to crown but what to condemn, not finding merits of good things but finding merits of punishment. If he were to act as truly from the rule of the law set before him, the sinner must be condemned; if he were to act

by this rule, whom would he set free? For he found all to be sinners; he alone came without sin who found us sinners. This the Apostle says: For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. What does it mean, fall short of the glory of God? That he himself may free you, not you yourself. Because you cannot free yourself, you need a liberator. What is it that you boast of? What is it that you presume upon from the law and righteousness? Do you not see what battles within you, from yourself, against yourself? Do you not hear one fighting and confessing and desiring help in the fight? Do you not hear the athlete of the Lord seeking from the trainer help for his struggle? For God does not wait for you to fight as an editor waits for you to fight in the amphitheater. He can give you the prize if you win; he cannot help you when you are in danger. Not so does God wait. See therefore: attend to him who says: For I delight in the law of God according to the inner man. But I see another law in my members fighting against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Why grace? Because it is given freely. Why given freely? Because your merits did not precede, but the benefits of God came before you.

Likewise from *The City of God*, book 20, chapter 17: But now not just any lowly member of that city, but John himself in his epistle cries out: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. And in the *Ecclesiastical Dogmas*, chapter 36: Whoever says that in the Lord's Prayer the saints say, Forgive us our debts, not for themselves, because that petition is no longer necessary for them, but for others who are sinners among their people, and that therefore each of the saints does not say, Forgive me my debts, but, Forgive us our debts, so that the just man is understood to ask this for others rather than for himself, let him be anathema. For the Apostle James was holy and just when he said: For in many things we all offend. For why was all added, unless that this statement should agree with the psalm, where it is read: Enter not into judgment with your servant, for no one living will be justified in your sight? And in the prayer of the most wise Solomon: There is no man who does not sin. And in the book of holy Job: He seals the hand of every man, that every man may know his own weakness. Whence also holy and just Daniel, when in his prayer he said in the plural, We have sinned, we have done wickedly, and the rest which he there truly and humbly confesses, lest anyone should think, as some think, that he said this not of his own but of his people's sins, afterward said: While I was praying and confessing my sins and the sins of my people before the Lord my God, he chose not to say, our sins, but said, the sins of his people, and his own, because he foresaw that those who would so badly misunderstand so great a prophet were yet to come. Again in book 3 against the two letters of the Pelagians, chapter 5, he wrote: For what was more excellent among the old people than the holy priests? And yet God commanded them first to offer sacrifice for their own sins. And what is more holy among the new people than the Apostles? And yet the Lord commanded them to say in their prayer: Forgive us our debts. Therefore the one hope of all the godly, groaning under this burden of corruptible flesh and in the weakness of this life, is that we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins.

Now from these testimonies of the most holy man, since it is manifest that the catholic Church has always believed that no one has ever excelled in sanctity to such a degree, or accumulated such a store of merits whether in doing or in suffering, as not still to need to pray as a sinner for pardon and to rely upon that mercy which freely remits sins, it is also abundantly clear that it has been the faith of the Church that no saints have suffered such great evils, however innocent they may appear before men and however imperiled only for the sake of Christ, as by these alone to have expiated even their own sins. From where therefore comes that surplus of afflictions and undeserved evils endured by the saints, out of which satisfaction is also to be drawn for others?

God indeed sends upon them many trials of faith, by which he makes their virtue illustrious and admirable. Yet the just God can inflict nothing upon them which they have not themselves also deserved by their own sins. For what evils do we not see owed, even to original sin alone, by which no one is not bound, in the so great torments and miseries of infants?

And Saint Augustine himself teaches this most clearly and at greatest length in his books against the Pelagians. It is permitted here to adduce what he wrote on Psalm 43, in which the merits of the martyrs are elsewhere most gloriously praised, on the verse: This, he says, is freely, for your name's sake, not for my merit, because you have deigned to act, not because I am worthy that you should act. For even this itself, that we have not forgotten you, and that our heart has not turned back, and that we have not stretched out our hands to a strange God, unless you had helped us, from where could we have had the power? Unless you had inwardly spoken to us, exhorted, and not forsaken us, from where could we have had the strength? Therefore whether suffering in tribulations or rejoicing in prosperity, redeem us, not for our merit's sake, but for your name's sake. The writings of not only this man but of all the saints are full of such sentiments. If therefore none at all can be redeemed and saved by any merits of their own, but all who come to share in life must rely upon the free remission of sins, what cause will the inventors of supererogation give for their having established a fixed measure of merits sufficient for salvation, which the saints are able to exceed and to lay up merits to be shared with others?

Thus we have plainly refuted what the Sorbonne has thrust upon the churches concerning the merits of supererogation, and with Scripture and all the orthodox fathers we confess that no one anywhere is raised to such a degree of sanctity as not to need to confess himself a sinner, to pray for pardon, and to rely on the mercy of God alone, and on no merits of his own. Yet we do not reject good works, nor do we deny that they are merits of eternal life, either for ourselves or for others. But just as we acknowledge faith itself, the fountain of good works and merits, to be the free gift of God, so also we confess the works and merits themselves to be the free gifts of God, which of themselves are nothing, but by the dignity of God and the merit of Christ merit, whether for us or for others, what God of his own free goodwill has determined to render to them.

The school boasts of that word of Paul in Colossians 1, where he glories that he fills up in his own body what was lacking in the afflictions of Christ, and this for the body of Christ. The will is to seem to collect from this passage that the saints have suffered many things which were not needed

for their own salvation, and that these they grant to the Church of Christ, which the Pope as monarch of the Church then dispenses by his own judgment to whomever he wills.

But who will assure us that Paul wished to say this? For if we give credence to the ancient interpreters of the Apostle, these words will mean something different to us. Christ was living in his Apostle, and therefore also suffering. All this was for the salvation of his Church, for whose sake he both does and suffers all things, as much in himself as in his members. Since a fixed measure of afflictions is decreed for every member of his, Paul too had his own measure, and when he was then fulfilling it he was doing so genuinely for the Church's sake, for he had consecrated himself to it and spent himself wholly for it. But that he suffered these things for the Church in order that from what both he and the other saints had suffered beyond the measure fixed for themselves, satisfaction might be drawn through the Pope for others who have not yet paid the penalties they have merited, who will confirm this to us? When the Apostle writes to the Philippians that the adversities which had befallen him had served for the progress of the Gospel, was he not then also suffering for the body of Christ? Yet he writes that his affliction had profited the Church in this, that others, stirred by his example, had acted more boldly in the preaching of the Gospel.

So whatever the saints are, do, and suffer, all is for the Church, and all is done and suffered for the Church. Each member serves for its own share in the common restoration of the body. But that it follows from this that some suffer more than the divine justice requires for the expiation of their own sins, and that these accrue to the treasury of the Church, out of which the Pope assigns to each at his own discretion what that person has not yet satisfied for his transgressions, who will prove this to be true? For how does this inference hold? He suffers for the Church, he benefits the Church, therefore he suffers for the Church and benefits the Church in this way. What logic teaches the inference of a particular from a particular, and from what is said simply, that which holds only in a certain respect?

The mystery of the communion of saints, both with their head Christ and with one another, is admirable and ineffable, through which that most ample ministry of the Holy Spirit is established for the restoration of the whole body in every respect, Ephesians 4. Such is the dignity of God toward those who believe in him, that he benefits even their descendants for a thousand generations, that he both repels the evils which the saints have merited from those who are in any way connected with them, and heaps upon them the goods of which they have made themselves unworthy. If there had been but ten just men in Sodom, the whole mass of the ungodly would have been spared for their sake. From how many evils was the people of Israel often rescued, and with how many good things in turn adorned, for the sake of the saints Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and the like?

What the prayers of Paul and the other saints of the New Testament have availed for others is indeed beyond measure. Hence the Apostles themselves set such great store by the prayers of the saints on their behalf. For although God does all good things for his own for his name's sake and for the merit of his Son, yet he so unites them to himself and inserts them into his Son, granting them to be of his flesh and bones, that he lavishes great things upon men through their grace as well,

declaring thereby how numberlessly he has those who fear him and how benevolently he performs his will for those who fear him. Upon this dignity of God toward his own rests also what the Lord said: Truly, truly I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works that I do, and greater than these will he do, because I go to the Father; and whatever you ask in my name, that I will do. Hence also it is that he shares his judgment, both over angels and over men, both good and evil, with them. These receive into eternal dwellings those who have done good to them; these also will condemn the wicked.

Furthermore, just as all this beneficence of God, which is administered through the word and sacraments, through prayers and that hidden communication of divine power, belongs to the Holy Spirit, whom Christ at his own pleasure imparts to those who believe in him, so all the benefits exhibited to men through the saints of God can only be dispensed through this same Spirit. And this the Scholastics also teach. Thomas Aquinas, easily the foremost among the Scholastics, writes that the minister of the Church in the use of the keys acts as an instrument, which can effectively accomplish nothing except insofar as it is moved by the principal agent. To prove this he cites Saint Dionysius at the end of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, affirming that priests must use their hierarchical powers in the manner in which the divinity moves them, as a sign of which, in Matthew 16, mention is made of the revelation of the divinity before the power of the keys was handed over, and in John 20, the gift of the Holy Spirit by which the sons of God are moved was set before the power of the remission of sins granted to the Apostles. Whence if the minister should presume to use his power apart from that divine motion, the effect does not follow.

Thus from the authority of the Scriptures and the agreement of Saint Dionysius, Aquinas taught; and so also we both believe and teach. And we acknowledge that the remission not only of sins but also of the penalties owed for sins is exhibited through the ministry of the Church, but from the merit of Christ alone, and therefore only through the Spirit of Christ, which remission is to be received by faith in the promise of Christ offered through the ministry of the Church. Hence the Apostles served the Lord to this end with respect to the elect, that they being absolved from the guilt of sins might receive the Spirit of living rightly and in order; and moreover that they might be freed from diseases and other evils which are sent on account of sins. But this power of the Spirit is not ordinary. It was frequent when the Gospel was at the beginning to be commended to the world; afterward it was withdrawn. By that ordinary power of loosing committed to the Church, men are restored to the grace of God if they receive the absolution of the Church in faith, and as much penalty is remitted to each at the same time as the divine dignity shall have determined. Concerning the fixed manner of either inflicting or remitting this penalty, nothing at all has been committed to the Church in general. For that Paul delivered certain persons to Satan to be afflicted in body, and again released them by his will, this was a peculiar power with which the Lord wished both him and others to be endowed at the beginning of the Church.

Now since nothing ought more to be one thing among Christians than that they should be so, and no obedience is fuller than that of the Gospel, and no care for correcting the vices that creep in is more vigorous than that shown by those who serve well as severe fathers and bishops of the Church:

the Church also has its own punishment of crimes and exacts its own penalties from offenders, not indeed that thereby what has been sinned may be abolished, for that is accomplished by the blood of Christ alone, but that by serious repentance they may correct and restore those whom the misdeeds of sinners had corrupted and offended, and that those same persons, thus humbled, may be made more cautious for the future. Of this punishment of sins Saint Paul makes mention in 1 Corinthians 5, 2 Corinthians 7 and 13, and elsewhere.

Such punishment was once exercised by true bishops against those who had either openly defiled the Church by their scandalous conduct, or who, having committed things secretly and then been struck with genuine repentance, had of their own accord submitted themselves to ecclesiastical discipline by voluntary confession. This chastisement consisted of fasts, vigils, lying prostrate on the ground, almsgiving, prayers, and other exercises both of bodily mortification and of piety. By these men were said to make satisfaction for their sins, not in the sense that they could thereby compensate for what they had sinned, but because by the attestation of such solid repentance they rebuilt the Church which they had damaged by their shameful deeds, and at the same time restrained the wantonness of their flesh by this means. Hence satisfaction was defined by Saint Augustine as the cutting off of the causes of sins and the refusing of entrance to their suggestions, in his Ecclesiastical Dogmas, chapter 54.

But when the vigilance and zeal of bishops grew cold, laws began to be enacted, prescribing how many days of fasting, vigils, prayers, and almsgiving should be assigned to each person for each sin. Hence arose those penances extending over an entire lifetime, over seven years, the forty-day fast on bread and water, which was commonly called Carrina, and the rest that are read in the Roman and other penitential books. And when this severity of punishing offenders in the Church came to have its place more in documents than in the observance of men, a way was immediately devised of redeeming fasts by almsgiving and the recitation of psalms. Hence arose indulgences, those papal pardons by which the Pope, on payment of a fixed sum of money, remits the imposed penances, as they are called, and so forth. This invention is so recent that the Master of the Sentences makes no mention of it at all. Then those almsgivings were converted to purposes far different from those relieving the necessities of the poor.

To this manifest overthrow of penance and abolition of all ecclesiastical discipline we certainly do not give our assent. Would that those who now hold power over ecclesiastical affairs were laboring to restore that salutary severity and discipline which the Apostles and the worthy bishops of old observed in punishing the sins of those who had submitted themselves to the obedience of the Gospel. They would find nothing lacking in our compliance.

Therefore these inventions, concerning a fixed measure of things rightly done and innocently endured which men are able to exceed, concerning works of supererogation and the papal dispensation of these, devised assuredly without Scripture, without the authority of the ancients, and finally without reason, what am I saying, without these things? Rather contrary to all of them: we have plainly rejected them and today repudiate them. But we do acknowledge this to be the dignity of

the Lord toward his own, that by true acts of contrition and by the chastisement of the flesh, holy prayers, almsgiving, and other pious actions of this kind, they are able to expiate both what they themselves and those for whom they intercede with the Lord have deserved by their evils. That the humiliation of his somewhat repentance profited even the otherwise impious King Ahab, Scripture testifies. Nor was it in vain that Saint Paul there mourned for those who had sinned and had done no penance. Yet all this power, whether of expunging one's own or another's sins through works of penitence, rests, as we believe and so testify, on the mercy of the Lord alone and the merit of Christ.

We likewise confess that there is such a communion of the Church, and such a mutual administration of the Holy Spirit and of all the divine beneficence, that some receive through the grace of others great benefits from God, both inward and outward. That it belongs to the bishops of the Church both to exact penalties from the wicked and scandalous in the Church and to remit them again to the truly penitent, no one among us denies, so long, however, as both the one and the other are directed toward the restoration of piety. We also acknowledge it to be their office to prescribe to those who have sinned secretly and come forward of their own accord and out of genuine grief seek to expiate their sins, the manner of making satisfaction. These things are both handed down in the divine letters and were observed by those who, both as congregations and as ministers, heard Christ and strove to be what they heard. We have so far from removing these that, since they have long since fallen into disuse through the sloth and negligence of the bishops to such a degree that no clear trace of them any longer appears, we are striving above all to restore them. Therefore in these matters too there is no reason why anyone should rightly accuse us of defection from the Church of Christ or of rejection of the observance of our forebears.

There is also something in our exposition of the nature of faith which has caused us to depart from the positions of the schools in order to cleave to the decrees of God. This is that the Scholastics declare that even faith, such as they have, is dead, that is, does not work through love, and that whether from this very error or from their own distrust of the goodness of God they deny that any person can be certain of his salvation or of whether he is in the grace of God. Neither of these positions ever entered the minds of the holy fathers and true believers.

These inventions we confess to reject and condemn as far as we are able, for by them the entire nature of faith is destroyed. But since we do this only through Scripture and the authority of the holy fathers, and indeed through the very things which the Scholastics themselves teach concerning faith, with the experience of the saints agreeing therewith, our adversary has no cause on this account either to brand us with the mark of heresy. All acknowledge that faith is an assent proved by the words of God through the persuasion of the Holy Spirit, and not to one or two things only, but to all things which he has revealed to us. And since this assent rests upon the words of God, the first truth, they confess that faith is more certain than all knowledge. Therefore no one truly believes in Christ who does not also have faith in him when he promises us eternal life if we believe in him. But if we truly believe this and believe him as the first truth who can neither be deceived nor deceive, what room, I ask, remains for any doubt? If now no doubt remains, but as the Scholastics themselves acknowledge this certainty is greater than if we held it as knowledge, how can there fail to be

certainty of eternal life in this faith? For the Lord promises this, not some beginning of it that then fades away again. Who is said to have solid faith in a man if he still inwardly doubts his promise? And whatever a man may affirm, if it cannot be known independently of him, however much you may believe and say you are certain, yet since you can be deceived, some fear of the opposite sometimes creeps in. For no man whatsoever cannot both be deceived and deceive. But if you admit that fear, you are rightly said to doubt such a promise and therefore not yet fully to believe him or to give faith to his words. And shall we say that a man believes God, who can neither be deceived nor deceive and whose word has made whatever he pleased, and gives credence to his words, when he nevertheless still wavers over his promise? But if you do not doubt, you are certain. It is therefore necessary that whoever truly believes in Christ who promises eternal life entertains no doubt whatsoever that he will be a partaker of this eternal life, and lives thenceforth in the certain hope and expectation of it.

These new theologians have been misled by the Vulgate reading of Ecclesiastes chapter 9, which has: A man knows not whether he is worthy of love or hatred, a reading which is found neither in the Hebrew nor in the Greek edition nor in the version of Saint Jerome. Solomon in this passage is not dealing with the question of whether the saints are uncertain of their salvation, for they glory in it: I hope in the Lord, I shall not be confounded; I trust in the Lord, I shall not waver. He wished to teach this, that the fortune of mortals, even of the saints, is so variously dispensed by the Lord that no one can know or foresee what will happen to them by way of the things they love or hate, that is, what they seek or avoid.

They also adduce that word of Paul: But neither do I judge myself, and I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not thereby justified, 1 Corinthians 4. But not even from this can it be proved that the saints are not most certain of having God as their propitious Father. Saint Paul wished in this passage to remove rashness of judgment at Corinth concerning the Apostles and teachers in either direction, and for that reason wrote that he set no store by any human judgment of himself, and moreover that he himself did not pronounce upon how much he ought to count before the judgment of God. For even if he was conscious of nothing against himself, he was not thereby proved in that, that is, approved. For he knew that he was justified by the grace of God and not by his own righteousness. But of this free justification by God he was so certain that he gloried that nothing whatsoever could separate him from the love of God, Romans 8. For that testimony of the Holy Spirit, which the Holy Spirit bears to the spirits of the saints that they are sons of God and therefore heirs, is both so far from being vain and offers itself with a certainty greater than all knowledge. Since this testimony cannot be lacking to anyone who is truly Christ's, for those who do not have his Spirit are not his, Romans 8, no one will be a true Christian who cannot be certain that he is held dear by God as a son and destined for eternal salvation. All say: In you, Lord, I have trusted, let me never be confounded in eternity.

But whoever considers the words of the sounder Scholastics more closely will see that they deny not the certainty of faith but of knowledge, when they deny that men can be certain whether they are in the grace of God. Thomas indeed, in question 112, article 5, when he objects to himself

that word of Paul in 1 Corinthians 2, We have received the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been given to us, replies that this is to be understood of the gifts of glory which have been given to us in hope and which we know most certainly through faith, and then adds that concerning grace the matter is otherwise, but feeling that this conflicts with what he has said, he takes refuge in a special revelation. But in the Summa, responding to the second objection, he writes that it belongs to the nature of faith that a man should be certain of those things of which he has faith. Now faith is chiefly about this, that God has promised that he will be our God, will forgive our sins, will give us eternal life, that is, that he favors us and that we are in his grace.

But in the main argument by which the school strives to confirm this dogma, it appears more clearly that he understood the certainty of knowledge, not of faith. For he derives his proof from the fact that the very principle of grace, God himself, is unknown to us, and that what is certainly known must have its principle known. Now God as propitious in forgiving sins and granting eternal life is not unknown to faith but only to reason.

It is pitiable to see how this man, otherwise not unlearned or irreligious, tortures himself here. How much more rightly and plainly Saint Bernard writes of these matters, though using the same reading of that passage in Ecclesiastes chapter 9. Who, he says in sermon 5 on the dedication of the church, can be saved? say the disciples of the Savior. And he replies: With men this is impossible, but not with God. This is all our confidence, this our only consolation, this the whole ground of our hope. But now certain of the possibility, what do we do about the will? Who knows if he is worthy of love or hatred? Who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? Here now it is absolutely necessary for faith to come to our aid, here truth must help us, so that what lies hidden concerning us in the heart of the Father may be revealed to us through his Spirit, and his Spirit bearing witness may persuade our spirit that we are sons of God. Thus he.

But this testimony of the Holy Spirit, as we have said, belongs to all who have the Spirit of Christ, that is, who are Christ's. Christians therefore are not those who waver over the mercy of God toward them, nor is this certainty of the grace of God a privilege, as they call it, an understanding gift of a few, but of all who truly believe in Christ. Thus no orthodox father has thought otherwise, and we thinking as they did and teaching what they taught can be charged with depraved innovation not even on account of this dogma.

The Scholastic theologians of our time lash us for this, that we say we are justified and saved by faith alone, though Paul openly affirms this even if he has not used the word alone. For when he writes in Romans 3 that we are justified by faith apart from the works of the law, and in Ephesians 2 by grace, not by works, he has certainly said in the thing itself absolutely that we are justified by faith alone and by no works. Now if you understand these to be works of the law, even if by them you understand only the ceremonies, they avail nothing here, nor will any others. For what better things could you imagine than those which God commanded in his own law? Nor does Paul in that passage speak of the ceremonies of the law as ones to be exhibited after the revelation of Christ, when they were of course to be abolished. He adduces the example of Abraham, who was justified by faith and

by no works, and from this he infers that no one at all is justified by works but all by faith, all who at any time have been made partakers of justification and will yet be.

Then he sets grace and works in opposition to each other in Romans 4, 8, and 11: if you say you are justified by works, you deny that you are justified by grace, and vice versa. Now to be justified by faith is the same as what we say, to be justified by grace. For faith embraces the promise of grace and rests on that alone, so that when we say we are justified by faith, it is nothing other than that we are justified by embracing grace through faith. If therefore all our justification rests on the grace of God, and this we receive by no works, for then it would not be grace, but by faith alone, by which we believe in God promising his grace, it is truly said that we are justified by faith alone and by no works, that is, that eternal life is adjudged to us.

Yet we do not deny that we are also justified by works, as Saint James says, and God repays each one according to his works, and it is not the hearers of the law but the doers who will be justified, Romans 2. But this our justification, that is, the final adjudging and exhibition of eternal life, springs from and depends upon the justification of faith, from which the good works themselves also proceed and have it that, though of themselves they can do nothing, they yet merit eternal life for us. Hence indeed, because through faith God already holds us among his sons, our works performed by his Spirit are reckoned as his own and he deigns to requite them with so great a reward. For we are unprofitable servants, even when we have done all that was commanded us. So as the beginning, middle, and completion of our salvation consists of grace alone, so it is received by faith alone. It is always true that whoever believes in Christ has eternal life.

These things the fathers have recognized admirably, and today the Scholastics do not calumniate us with this perversion of Scripture but have judged it to be the fitting interpretation of the words of Paul, since from what Paul says, apart from works, or through faith, not by works, we say we are justified by faith alone and by no works. Origen on that passage of Romans 3, Where then is your boasting? and so forth, wrote thus: Therefore after the Apostle had shown above what was the advantage of the Jew and what was the usefulness of circumcision, and had taught that the oracles of God were entrusted first to them, and by this had seemed to be extolling their boasting which they customarily raise against the Gentiles, and then against this had objected in what followed that the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ is unto all who believe, making no distinction, but that all, both Jews and Greeks, have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by grace and through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and that he himself is the propitiation through faith, and that he who is of faith is justified; now placing this as it were as a conclusion to his assertions in this passage he says: Where is your boasting? and so forth. And he says that the justification of faith alone suffices, so that a person merely by believing is justified, even if he has performed no work. For by faith the thief was justified without the works of the law, because the Lord did not require of him what he had previously done, nor waited to see what work he would perform after he believed, but with confession alone justified him and took him as companion into paradise to enter it. But also that woman who in the Gospel according to Luke is reported to have heard at the feet of Jesus: Your sins are forgiven you, and again: Your faith has saved you, go in

peace. And in many places in the Gospel we read the Savior using this form of words, so as to say that faith is the cause of a person's salvation. Therefore a man is justified by faith, to whose justification the works of the law contribute nothing. But where there is no faith which justifies the believer, even if one has works from the law, yet because they are not built upon the foundation of faith, though they may appear to be good works, they cannot justify their performer if he lacks the faith which is the seal of those who are justified by God. But who will boast in his own righteousness, when he hears God saying through the prophet: For all your righteousness is as a garment of a menstruous woman? Therefore the only just boasting is in the faith of the cross of Christ.

Ambrose on that passage of Romans 4, But to him who believes in him, and so forth, writes in this manner: He says this because to the believer, that is, to the Gentile who believes in Christ, without the works of the law, his faith is reckoned for righteousness, as to Abraham. How then do the Jews think themselves justified by the works of the law with the justification of Abraham, when they see that Abraham was justified not by the works of the law but by faith alone? Therefore the law is not needed when the ungodly man is justified before God by faith alone. According to the purpose of the grace of God, thus he says it was decreed by God, so that with the law ceasing, faith alone of the grace of God should be required for salvation. Just as David also says. He confirms this with the example of the prophet: The blessedness of a man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works. He calls them blessed of whom God has ordained this, that without labor and any observance they are justified before God by faith alone.

Hilary on Matthew, Canon 8, concerning the scribes, writes thus: The scribes are troubled that sin has been forgiven by a man. For they regarded him only as a man in the Lord Jesus Christ, and as one who had remitted what the law could not release. For faith alone justifies.

And Saint Chrysostom, that most ardent exactor of works and defender of free will, on that passage of Romans 3, Boasting is excluded, through what law? of works? By no means, but through the law of faith. What then, he says, is the law of faith? To be saved by grace. In this place he shows the power of God, that he not only saves but also justifies and brings to glory, requiring nothing of works but seeking faith only, ἀλλὰ πίστιν ζητήσας μόνον. Saint Augustine need not be adduced as witness here, to whom this manner of speaking is most familiar.

Thus write the pillars of the churches. Now judge, all you who love truth, whether we believe and teach orthodoxly concerning faith, we who use nothing either in sense or even in words that has not been handed down to us in this way both in the divine writings and in the writings of the fathers. If now no one dares to charge those most sacred teachers of the Church speaking in this way with heresy, judge you therefore, after you have lifted up your eyes to the mountains from which your help comes, that is, to the authors of the divine Scriptures, attending with all their marrow and all their bones crying out: Lord, who is like to you? Do not say carelessly without any injury to the mountains: My help is from the Lord who made heaven and earth. Not only will the mountains then not be angry with you, but then they will love you and then favor you more. If you place your hope in

them, they will be grieved. The angel who showed many divine and wonderful things to a man was being adored by the man as though lifting his eyes to a mountain. But the angel, calling him back to the Lord, said: Do not do this; adore him. For I am your fellow servant and of your brothers, and so forth. See here how purely and simply all help is to be sought and obtained from the one heavenly Father through the merit of his Son.

But you say: We wish to implore this very help of God through the intercession of the saints. What? Do you then think the ears of the saints are more readily open to your prayers than those of your Father in heaven, who has embraced you with such love that he delivered his only-begotten Son to death for you and with him has given you all things? Read what Saint Chrysostom has left written in the homily on the progress of the Gospel, where he treats the fact that the Lord heard the Canaanite woman when she herself was pressing him in prayer for her daughter, but did not hear the Apostles praying for her. Moreover, he says, you need no patron before God, nor much running about to flatter others, but even if you are alone and lack a patron and pray to God yourself, you will altogether obtain your request. For God does not so readily give ear when others pray for us as when we ourselves pray, even if we are full of very many evils. In this sense this man of God, in this and in very many other homilies, records many such things.

I confess that it is an ancient observance for Christians even now rejoicing in this to have sought the prayers of the saints. For such is our nature that we desire everything, even the prayers of those set apart, and even inanimate things and those devoid of sense as far as we are concerned, to be affected by that same feeling by which we ourselves are held. Hence it is that heaven and earth are called as witnesses against the people of Israel, and the psalmist, for the communion of joy in the salvation of the Lord, invites mountains, forests, and rivers. And since the saints are carried with their whole breast toward the thing they pray for without ceasing, that the name of God may be sanctified in them and everywhere, that his kingdom may advance and be extended everywhere, that all things may be most graciously ordered according to his will, and so on, they certainly desire this very thing to be sought by all, and most of all by those who live by the same Spirit, are members of the same body, and partakers of the same inheritance. For this reason Saint Paul, as we said above, and all the other saints have so earnestly sought the prayers of their brethren for themselves, of those only who were still enjoying this present life, among whom the Lord has established the mutual administration of his Spirit.

The first degree of piety is to love holiness, then the saints, because the saints did not come before holiness, but holiness before the saints. Without cause therefore does he honor the just who despises justice. How will you escape? Will the saints deliver you, whose monuments you adorn? The saints cannot be friends of those to whom God is an enemy. Can a household be at peace when the master is opposed to it? How will you escape? Or perhaps will an empty name deliver you, because you appear to be the people of God? What does it profit a harlot if she has a chaste name? So it profits nothing to a sinner if he is called a servant of God.

But that temples should be built for the saints and sacrifices offered, it is abundantly clear from the testimony of Saint Augustine that the orthodox fathers regarded this as impiety and the foulest idolatry. He writes against Faustus, book 20, chapter 21, in this manner: The Christian people celebrate the memorials of the martyrs with religious solemnity, both to stir up imitation and to share in their merits and be aided by their prayers, yet in such a way that we constitute altars at the memorials of the martyrs to none of the martyrs but to God himself the God of the martyrs. For who among the presiding ministers standing at the altars in the places where the bodies of the saints rest has ever said: We offer to you, O Peter, or Paul, or Cyprian? But what is offered is offered to God, who crowned the martyrs, at the memorials of those whom he crowned, so that from the prompting of those very places a greater affection may arise for kindling love both toward those whom we can imitate and toward him with whose help we can do so. We therefore honor the martyrs with that honor of love and fellowship with which in this life also holy men of God are honored, in whom we perceive a heart prepared for such a passion for the truth of the Gospel. But them more devoutly insofar as we more securely praise them as victors now in a happier life over all the uncertainties that have been overcome, while we are still fighting in this one. But with that worship which in Greek is called latria, which cannot be expressed in Latin by one word, since it is a kind of service properly due to divinity, we neither worship nor teach that anyone is to be worshipped except the one God. Now since the offering of sacrifice pertains to this worship, whence idolatry is so named in those who exhibit this also to idols, in no way do we offer or command to be offered any such thing to any martyr, any holy soul, or any angel. And whoever falls into this error is corrected by sound doctrine, either that he may be corrected or that he may take heed. For the saints themselves, whether men or angels, do not wish to have shown to them what they know is owed to God alone. This appeared in Paul and Barnabas, when the Lycaonians, moved by the miracles performed through them, wished to offer them sacrifice. For rending their garments and confessing and persuading them that they were not those, they forbade this to be done to them. It appeared also in the angels, as we read in the Apocalypse: an angel forbidding himself to be adored and saying to him who would adore him: I am your fellow servant and of your brothers, and so forth. These things are plainly demanded for themselves by proud spirits, the devil and his angels, as through all the temples and sacred things of the Gentiles, whose likeness has been expressed in certain proud men also, as we hold in memory concerning certain kings of Babylon. Hence holy Daniel bore his accusers and persecutors, and when the edict of the king had been set forth that nothing should be sought from any God but from the king alone, he was apprehended worshipping and beseeching his God, that is, the one true God, as in book 22, chapter 10 of The City of God. In fine, to such gods they both built temples and set up altars and appointed priests and performed sacrifices. But to our martyrs we build not temples as to gods but memorials as to dead men whose spirits live with God, nor do we erect altars there on which to sacrifice to the martyrs, but we immolate sacrifice to the one God both of the martyrs and of us, at which sacrifice the men of God who conquered the world in confession of him are named in their place and order, but are not invoked by the priest who sacrifices. For the priest sacrifices to God and not to them, though he sacrifices at their memorial, because he is the priest of God, not of them. And

the sacrifice itself is the body of Christ, which is not offered to them, because they themselves also are this.

Likewise in the book *On True Religion*, the last chapter: Let us not love visible spectacles, lest in wandering from the truth itself and loving shadows we be cast into darkness. Let there be no religion for us in our own phantasms. For any real thing whatsoever is better than everything that can be imagined at will. Let there be no religion for us in the cult of dead men, because if they have lived piously, they are not in such a state as to seek such honors, but they wish him to be worshipped by us by whose light they rejoice that those who have deserved it are our fellow servants. They are therefore to be honored for imitation, not adored for religion.

In these let us observe that phrase: they are named in their place and order, but are not invoked by the priest who sacrifices. And likewise this: We therefore honor the martyrs with that honor of love and fellowship with which in this life also holy men of God are honored. And let us by no means pass over with inattentive mind that other phrase: They are therefore to be honored for imitation, not adored for religion.

And in this manner, as these catholic men handed it down and the whole Church of Christ in former times believing them held it, so also we both believe and teach concerning the cult and invocation of the saints, namely that all hope is to be placed in the one God through the death of his Son, that all things are to be sought and expected from him. Since we are justified by faith and have peace toward God and access as sons to the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, Romans 5, who has both merited and given us his Spirit, by whom we cry to God Abba, Father, we do not doubt in any necessity to approach with firm confidence in his goodwill our heavenly Father himself through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and to pray for whatever we need, unworthy sinners though we are. For there is the certain promise of our Lord that we shall prevail upon the Father for whatever we pray for in this way.

And since earnest and fervent prayer, as is its nature, calls upon all things, we ask our brothers to pray for us, and those same things which we must pray for without ceasing, that the name of God may be sanctified in all, that the kingdom of God may come and be extended everywhere, that all things may be most graciously ordered according to his will, and so forth. Here we willingly bring in the memory of the saints, so that considering that while they lived and prayed they obtained everything from the goodwill of the heavenly Father, we too may knock with fuller confidence at that same goodwill of our Father.

If anyone there, weighing that infinite indulgence and readiness of God toward them and at the same time their charity toward us miserable ones, still fellow servants and fellow members with them, bursts out with such ardor of soul as to address them as present before him and beg them to intercede with God for him, though no Scripture teaches this, yet if it is done in this way, we condemn no one. For such persons pray first to God himself and rely with full confidence on the goodness of God and the merit of Christ, and they invoke the saints to pray with them, not to pray for them as if they themselves either did not dare or were too negligent to pray. They acknowledge that

their prayers, as their own, so also those of the saints, will avail not from the saints' own merits but from the mercy of God alone and the intercession of Christ. Trusting in this, however unworthy, they do not doubt that they will obtain whatever they ask, even if they pray alone, with no saints whatsoever, whether those who live with us here or those who live with Christ, interceding for them. In minds so disposed, where we see nothing attributed to human merits but all to the mercy of God and the redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ, we cannot condemn those who invoke the saints to pray for them, even if they do so without any command or example from Scripture. And this indeed is the only manner in which we see the invocation of the heavenly saints to have been used and handed down by the orthodox fathers.

But now among the common people of the Christian folk it is far otherwise. Men ill at ease in their consciences and thinking nothing seriously of repentance are afraid, like our father Adam, of the sight of God. The patronage of Christ does not come to mind, and what keeps them from it is the impurity of life which still persists in their fixed purpose of living. Hence, distrusting the mercy of the heavenly Father and the intercession of Christ, they admit this Satanic imposture, thinking that through the patronage of the Lady, the Virgin Mother of God, and of other saints and angels, they may obtain for themselves, though persisting in their crimes and scandals, not only impunity for what they have committed wickedly and scandalously, but moreover that they may go on felicitously in these things, with a long life that is and an abundance of the things which this flesh seeks as the fuel of its evils. What else do these people seek from the saints but that God should grant them through the saints' holiness and intercession to live happily as the ungodly for a long time? Since no greater contempt of both God and the saints can be devised, why should we not with the word of the Lord speak out sharply against this so gross and monstrous impiety? And woe to all who have been entrusted with the dispensation of the Gospel and are dumb dogs in this matter.

There are indeed some who say that they seek in the patronage of the saints above all this, that they may be able to live innocently and piously, to repent truly of their perversity, but that they are deterred from approaching God himself to pray for pardon and other benefits by the impurity of the life in which they have still been, not daring to approach God himself. These certainly are to be diligently admonished not to deceive themselves, and to inquire carefully what it is that truly hinders them from fleeing rather and more quickly to the very fountain of mercy, God himself, to Christ, our first advocate and mediator, to the intercession of the saints, since no one receives these sinners of ours more graciously than this our true advocate, no one cares for them more indulgently, no one has spent more for their redemption. And who indeed has given to the saints themselves that very Spirit by which they are able to have mercy on sinners? Certainly every mind in need of someone's prayers looks whence it more quickly hopes to obtain what it seeks. Now we know that the saints can neither hear us nor wish to help us, unless the Lord works this in them, from whom every good thing comes, and the saints are whatever they are. What reason therefore, I ask, is there that whether stung by the goads of conscience for our sins or pressed by want of other things, the soul should not lift itself up rather to the patronage of the saints, to the mercy of our heavenly Father, to the patronage of Christ so open to all, to his certain and efficacious intercession for all things?

Without doubt, if these persons diligently look into the recesses of their own souls, if they thoroughly search out the innermost chambers of their hearts, which the saints are now indeed able to scrutinize, they will without doubt see that there is no other cause for this perverse counsel and their undoubted defection from the one true God in seeking the intercession of the saints before that of Christ, than the one that deters ill-mannered sons who have not yet brought themselves to submit their will to their father's from praying to their father themselves when they need anything. Those of this kind feel beforehand that if they themselves undertake to pray to the Father, he will reproach them for their intemperance and wickedness. And since they think they cannot yet shake off those vices, they shrink from coming into the sight of the Father, from whom in their heart they still wholly distrust themselves.

And so they suborn the mother, relations, and whoever else they can, to pray to the Father on their behalf for what they want, and they will sooner go without what they desire than become suppliants to the Father themselves.

The same thing happens to all those whose first vows, whatever evil presses upon them or good is desired, are not directed to our heavenly Father through Christ the Lord. For God promises here to those who repent the forgiveness of all sins and every kind of fatherly beneficence and eternal salvation. Christ the Lord says: Come to me all you who labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Whatever you shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Therefore if these gentle invitations do not move anyone to pass by all earthly and heavenly beings and to run to this our propitiator and throne of grace, Christ, and through him to the Father of mercies and of all consolation and indulgence, with the best hope of obtaining whatever he needs, such a person without doubt does not yet fully consent with his God, has not yet fully laid aside the will to sin. For whoever truly feels his sins is so greatly tormented thereby, that he has offended his Father in heaven, that he cannot be at peace until he has confessed his impiety to him and prayed to him himself for pardon. The saint said: I said, I will confess my transgression to the Lord, and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. For this shall every good man pray to you, Psalm 32. That publican did not dare to come forward as the Pharisee, he could not bear to lift up his eyes to heaven, so heavily was he weighed down by the burden of his sins, yet he prayed to none other than God himself for pardon: Be merciful to me a sinner. Those who truly grieve over their sins will be of this mind, and they earnestly seek the grace of God, and they cannot look to others before God and that certain advocate of ours, Jesus Christ. They acknowledge one God, one mediator between God and men. They have a promise from him; he intercedes for us; he is our advocate when we have sinned, who not only intercedes for us but also makes satisfaction for us. He is the propitiation for our sins, 1 John 2. This the saints cannot be, and Scripture teaches nothing at all concerning their intercession either; there is no example of those saints whom Scripture commends ever having been sought as intercessors; there is no promise of their intercession.

Accordingly those who seek the intercession of the saints before that of Christ to God testify by this very perversity of theirs in seeking help that they are still in a spirit so averse from our Lord Jesus Christ and thus also from solid righteousness and true piety. They feel that all things are in the

hand of God, and that he is displeased with them since they are still of contrary will, they acknowledge this. The saints they reverence as fellow servants, not as righteousness itself, as Christ is; they do not think they offend the saints nearly so much by their evil pursuits, and so they supplicate the saints rather than Christ himself, seeking thereby a shield and remedy for their wounded conscience. They will not say, I suppose, that they prefer the saints to the Lord Jesus in this matter because the saints have more influence with the Father, or that they are more merciful toward sinners.

If they then say that their unworthiness keeps them back from so great a patron, let that word come to their aid: just as to give to the unworthy, as that pious Picus sang, is a thing supremely worthy of God, so the more wicked men are, the more it becomes the glory of our Lord Jesus in this, that he reconciles them to the Father. For he came not to call the just but sinners, truly to repentance. Therefore no other cause can exist, if you do not strive to commend yourself first to the grace of the Father through him through whom alone one comes to the Father, than that you are still estranged from true repentance and are seeking to be able to persist in your evil pursuits with impunity and felicity.

This is present in all superstition and false worship of God, and this is why the prophets of God have always everywhere spoken against it so sharply. For what greater contempt of God could be devised than to strive by means of his spirits, the saints, or other creatures, or even by the works of men themselves, to obtain by his help to be able to live long and happily an impious and perverse life? For what else do you say those persons seek, who while persisting in the old age of sin desire that all things may go well for them? This plague cannot be absent where the soul trembles before calling upon God himself above all through his Son, whom he has constituted our propitiator through his blood, just as it cannot but be present together with the true invocation of God and Christ, the conversion of the whole man to the will of God. For who could sustain not giving himself wholly to the one from whom he prays and expects all things? Hence the saints of God have acknowledged and proclaimed that in prayer poured out to God through Christ there is the greatest power of transforming us into God. And we seek this very thing restored in the Church and properly commended to the faithful of Christ, not the neglect of the saints or the contempt of heavenly intercessions. They love us in Christ and never cease to desire that we may profit in him.

But since Scripture makes so much of the saints praying for one another here, yet nowhere with even a word advises that the prayers of those saints who dwell in heaven should be sought, what do we suppose the reason for this silence to have been? Certainly Scripture equips for every good work and instructs for salvation most perfectly, 2 Timothy 3. So many and great things does God himself testify that he has done for his people on account of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and the ancient saints of this order. Yet who of the saints of either the old or new testament is read ever to have sought their intercession? Greatest among those born of women was John the Baptist; greater still James, Stephen, and the others of this order, already revealed as denizens of the kingdom of heaven. Who would doubt that these were most dear to God? Many think Paul was a gift to the prayers of Stephen. Yet who of the godly whose memory Scripture preserves is read to have

submitted them as intercessors to God? Since this was not done without cause, why in the world should we imagine any other reason than lest some window should be opened to insufficient trust in the patronage of Christ and to a consequent turning away from the very righteousness of God toward the vanity of human inventions and presently to a sense of security in crimes, as our nature inclines and as we see done everywhere most grossly?

Furthermore we admonish here those who think seriously about their salvation not to suppose that they are invoking God first through Christ if they say the Lord's Prayer before all else. For there are many who approach the saints with no other prayer after they have repeated a certain number of the words of the Lord's Prayer, offering this very thing to the saints as a kind of sacrifice. That one is invoked first to whom we first and with fuller confidence look in every danger and difficulty of affairs, to whom we implore help in our first impulses, on whose goodwill we chiefly rely. Now how many Christians today will you find in whom in any danger and want of all desired things the soul so flies first through Christ to God as not to doubt that whatever it has asked it will receive from the goodwill of God through the merits of Christ, even if no saints whatsoever otherwise lend their patronage?

For even if the mind lifts itself up to God in the first place before thinking of the saints, yet if it does not rest in the promise of God, certain that it has already certainly obtained whatever it has prayed for that is salutary, it is not yet praying to God in faith, and therefore is not yet praying to him first. And if it still hopes to obtain through the patronage of the saints what it was unable to obtain by its own praying, the chief hope is still placed in the saints, these are the ones it truly prays to first, even though both thought and words may appear to be directed first to God.

Therefore as everything that Scripture does not teach, so also this invocation of the saints is a thing full of danger, which among the common people of the Christian folk is, alas, too manifest. For through occasion of this the situation has deteriorated to where there is little difference between the cult which our people today render to the saints and the cult which the pagans once rendered to their gods. And this does not move our bishops and theologians at all, since it is profitable. But we are laboring to restore the true cult of the saints such as the ancient Church observed, and this, it seems, is worthy to be punished with fire and sword. But God it is who sees and will judge these things. And those who fear him will see from this sufficiently that what we have taught in this matter could not be kept silent with the majesty of Christ unimpaired.

These things were sufficient for this point. Yet lest I seem knowingly to have passed over the argument by which our adversaries think the invocation of the saints, not as the holy fathers observed it but in their own profitable version, to stand invincible, I am pleased to examine this briefly as well. The argument is this: the saints, endowed with true charity, pray here for men and obtain many good things for them; now they are possessed of more perfect charity; therefore they are now more able to obtain by prayer, and since their intercession with God was sought with piety by Christians while they lived here, it is sought with greater piety while they reign with Christ in heaven. This argument is held by our adversaries to be altogether irrefutable.

In this argument we first receive this point, that the saints wish us well and pray for our salvation; this is certain to proceed from their charity toward us, and the fuller their charity toward us now while they are with Christ, the more ardent they are for our salvation. But whether from the fact that they are now possessed of more perfect charity it follows that the saints are now praying more for us is a question to be judged. The saints in charity weep in this life with those who weep; therefore in the future they will weep still more: no one will admit this. But prayer as it is commended in the Scriptures is a certain anxious yearning for the perfecting of the divine will in us lifted up to God, resting on faith in his promise. But both faith and all this anxiety belong only to this life. In the future, as all things are seen, so the soul is calm in all things, and even the expectation of the resurrection contains no distress in itself.

Now God, in order that our zeal for him may be more and more inflamed day by day and our confidence may grow, wills us to pray to him by continual sighs for those things which he has already determined before we pray to give out of himself, and to which he himself impels us by his own Spirit to seek from him. For the more assiduous we are in prayers to God, whether for ourselves or for others, and the more continually we thereby also experience more certainly how gracious God is toward us and how readily he does the will of those who fear him, the more firm becomes the persuasion that all things depend upon the goodness of God, that this goodness is present to all who seek it, and the fuller becomes the will to live for God. For as though carried up into heaven, we address God in holy prayers in his very presence, and by the breath of his Spirit we are joined and united with him in a certain inexplicable manner. But nothing of this kind can be sought by those in heaven, for they see God as he is; hence they so hold the will of God and take such delight in it that there remains no cause for striving after it, for the sake of which perseverance in prayers here, both for ourselves and for others, is maintained. And indeed when we pour out prayers for others as well, these are suggested to us by the Spirit of Christ, so that through zeal for the kingdom of God we ourselves may be more inflamed thereby and may more happily serve our neighbors toward that same kingdom. Toward which indeed all the actions of Christians tend.

Christ the Lord intercedes for us with the Father, but what else shall we say this is than the perpetual presentation of his blood which he shed for us? The Spirit intercedes for us with groanings unutterable. In the same way the angels also pray for us. In the same way we receive the prayer of Onias and Jeremiah in the second book of the Maccabees, which it is proper to understand in the same manner. These things are described in the language of this life, such as we alone understand. But who would not acknowledge that the reality is far more sublime? Certainly no one will say that the spirit of Onias has hands, yet he was seen to stretch out his hands toward Judah.

But I confess that both angels and saints have the will for our salvation, and it is permissible to call this prayer. Yet it will not be prayer of the same kind as that which the saints here have. Therefore just as it does not follow that the saints groaning with us here pour out prayers for us without ceasing, that therefore they also pray thus for us in heaven, so neither will that be a firm argument: the prayers of the saints are to be sought while they live here, therefore also when they reign with Christ. In prayers that are offered here there is the exercise and advancement of faith, and

this is the reason why the Spirit of Christ impels us both to pray for one another and to ask to be prayed for. But this reason has no place among those in heaven. There is therefore not, as these men suppose, that firm argument: the saints are to be invoked while they dwell here to pray for us, therefore also when they are there. But perhaps this is too subtle an argument, and the simplicity of faith may bear with it.

We have now set forth abundantly that we attribute to the saints our fullest love, our perfect and unending desire for their salvation, and also that they are of such value to God that for their sake many good things are given to us. If anyone, after praying to the Father through Christ, is certain that he will receive even from his own what he prayed for, and in the warmth of feeling lifts himself up and addresses them as though present with him, begging them to pray with the Lord on his behalf, or rather beseeching God that he would deign to hear their perpetual prayers for our salvation, we do not at all condemn such feeling. This alone we detest: that more confidence is placed in their intercession than in Christ's, and the other things that spring from this superstition. And finally we acknowledge and teach that the saints are to be held in the highest esteem, but this is done by those who hold them worthy of such regard that they imitate their faith with all their strength and in whom they unceasingly proclaim God. These things we read concerning the cult and invocation of the saints in the orthodox fathers; thus the whole Church of Christ thinks of it. What has been introduced beyond this betrays of itself from what spirit it has proceeded. Since we reject these things alone, we do what the religion of Christ itself requires. It is far from binding us with the charge of heresy or any impiety. Let the godly judge.

With equal accusation our adversaries attack us on account of the Mass, because just as the cult of the saints is above all profitable, so is the Mass still more so, since by the Mass there is promised not only the merits of the saints but of our Lord Jesus Christ himself and of all the saints together. But we believe and teach nothing concerning it other than what the Church of God has always believed.

The Scholastic school also acknowledges the substance of the Mass, what the Lord performed at his holy Supper and instituted to be performed. And what did the Lord do at that time? He reclined with his disciples, of whom none had yet been found in any such crime as would give cause to expel him from that holy feast. He distributed the sacred symbols of bread and wine, and with these his body and blood, the reality of the symbols, equally to all alike. He testified that this was his body to be delivered for them, his blood to be shed for their sins, and by that blood by which the new covenant is established. And finally in this holy feast he commended the celebration of his memorial.

Hence Saint Paul concluded that it is not the Lord's supper if each person celebrates his own and not all together, and he admonishes the Corinthians to wait for one another when they came together for the sacred assembly. Furthermore, that there is exhibited here the communion of the body and blood of the Lord, in which we are one body and one bread in the Lord and which draws us away from all communion with demons, 1 Corinthians 10.

All these things we strive to observe as religiously as we can. We invite to the table of the Lord only those who wish to be disciples of the Lord, who depend on his word, who are believed to be partakers of the new covenant. Here we present the body and blood of the Lord through the sacred symbols, proclaiming with all diligence that by this food and drink alone, that is, by the true communion of the body and blood of the Lord, eternal life is established for us, just as these things alone, immolated for us, could expiate our sins. Our flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and therefore it is necessary that we become partakers of the flesh and blood of the Son of God. We exhort men to have faith in these things and to show themselves grateful for such great benefits of the Lord.

In those to whom it is given to have faith, trust in Christ is wondrously strengthened, charity advances excellently, and the holiness of the whole life is very greatly renewed. For just as this food of eternal life, of the life of God, is received, so that very life ought above all to be nourished and to put itself forth. Hence with good reason, praises of the true God resound with the greatest alacrity and fervor of souls, most ardent prayers are poured out for all orders of men, all the powers of man tend toward God, the whole man is filled with God. For here he eats Christ, God and man, the restorer of our kind.

Hence finally as the sacred body of the Church is supremely vigorous from this its life-giving pasture, so there is also put forth most effectively all that holy administration of the gifts and power of the Spirit of God, every member making increase of the body according to its own measure, unto the building up of itself in love, Ephesians 4. What is exhibited here most fully is all that our Lord Jesus Christ has been made to us and has bestowed upon us. And so there is constituted in the holy Supper the supreme sacrifice, not of praises only, but of Christ himself and of ourselves. For the power and fruit of what Christ offered himself on the cross we here receive, and then we share it with our brethren according to the measure of the sacred ministry and the hidden fellowship of the saints with one another. From this we cannot but consecrate ourselves wholly to the Lord, and testify this zealously by generous giving of alms to the least of the Lord's people.

For these reasons not only the early fathers but the Scholastics too have called the holy Supper of the Lord a sacrifice. Saint Chrysostom in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Homily 17: Our High Priest is he who offered the sacrifice that cleanses us. We offer even now what was then offered, which cannot be consumed. But what we do is done in commemoration of what was done. For do this, he said, in remembrance of me. We do not make a different sacrifice, as the High Priest did, but we always make the same sacrifice, or rather we perform the commemoration of the sacrifice. And Augustine in The City of God, book 10, chapter 6: For this is the sacrifice of Christians: we many are one body in Christ, which also the Church celebrates in the sacrament of the altar, familiar to the faithful, where it is shown to her that in what she offers, she herself is offered. Likewise chapter 20: Whence that true mediator, insofar as by taking the form of a servant he was made mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, while in the form of God he receives sacrifice together with the Father, with whom he is also one God, yet in the form of a servant he chose rather to be the substance of sacrifice, lest anyone should on this occasion suppose that sacrifice ought to be offered to any

creature. Through this he is also priest: himself both offering and the oblation. The daily sacrifice of the Church he willed to be the sacrament of this reality, since he is himself the head of this body, and this body is his head's body, so that both she through him and he through her is accustomed to be offered. Of this sacrifice the manifold and various sacrifices of the ancient saints were signs, when this one sacrifice was prefigured through many, just as many words express one thing, so that it might be commended to many without weariness. To this supreme sacrifice all false sacrifices have yielded. Thus all the fathers write concerning this sacred rite.

Thomas Aquinas in question 83 affirms that the celebration of the Eucharist is called the immolation of Christ for two reasons: both because it is a certain representative image of the passion of Christ, and because in it the effect of the passion of Christ is received. No one among us contradicts these points. To these we add, as Thomas also did not pass over in silence, that only those become partakers of this sacrifice who are living members of Christ, that is, who are, as he himself says, joined to this sacrament through faith and charity.

This is our doctrine concerning the holy celebration of the Eucharist which they call the Mass. Since there is nothing in it whatsoever that has not been handed down by all catholic writers and the Church of Christ itself has always observed, here too our adversary has no ground for pressing the charge of heresy.

The impious traffic in Masses we truly execrate. And that manifest superstition by which men, if only they have been present at the Mass, whatever they believe or however they live, promise themselves impunity from their crimes and every kind of blessing from God: wherever we can we strive to explode this. For what more atrocious contempt of Christ could be devised than to seek and hope for the highest favor of God and the greatest benefits from such profanation of the Supper, from which all the ancient canons command all Christians to be absent unless they come without any thought of repentance, without any sense of Christ? How plainly manifest it is from the way common people who yet think themselves not well safe if they have not heard the sacred Mass on that day live their lives. And since these same people transgress all the commandments of God so securely while yet observing this one thing so religiously as to be present at Mass every day, who does not see that in this very thing they place the whole helm and summit of their piety?

Yet here the Lord instituted the memorial of himself, he who died for this very reason that we who are dead to sins might live to righteousness. Here he commends to us his body, which was immolated for delivering us from our innate depravity. Here he gives the cup of his blood, which was shed for our sins. But what account is made of these things today by the common people who hear Mass? When they have looked upon the sacraments and given them bodily reverence, have muttered their little prayers, they think themselves discharged of all religious duty and worship of God and return to their impious pursuits, thinking they have obtained from this that God will now turn away all evils from them and give the desired success of any matters whatsoever.

The profanation of this most sacred mystery I speak of in those Masses which are held for the sake of external profit only, with no zeal for Christ, and by those who live scandalously and do not

celebrate the holy Communion together with Christians and do not proclaim the death of the Lord there, whereby the faith of those present in Christ might be renewed, but only recite certain things which they themselves do not weigh, nor do they set them forth that others may weigh them, which God has so explicitly forbidden through Saint Paul, 1 Corinthians 14. The only effect these produce is that the men who are present at Mass place all hope of salvation in those ceremonies, without faith, without repentance, so that they go away from these sacred rites not only no better but even worse, being now more secure in their perversity. What place God holds for these things, it is permitted to read in the first chapter of Isaiah and throughout the sacred prophets, where he sets forth what he thinks of ceremonies employed without zeal for true piety. And the more sacred the ceremonies are, the more grievous is the abomination to God when men abuse them so impiously.

We are aware of that matter concerning the work done, but here it is this: the Supper of Christ, administered according to the institution of Christ, will profit not by the work of the one doing it, that is, by the merit of the minister, but by the work done, that is, by what is of the Lord's institution and is done for that purpose. But it will profit those who communicate in it, as Saint Thomas taught, through faith and charity. For it is from the power of Christ, not the merits of ministers, that these things are salutary. But where the sacrificing minister administers the holy Supper unworthily, and at the same time those who are present communicate in it most unworthily, namely by only seeing and hearing what is done and said, and not also by believing and loving what is here promised and enjoined, to both alike that which is instituted for salvation turns to judgment and condemnation. Which would also certainly promote salvation, if it were used with true faith, whatever the minister might be.

These things we are not the first to detest. The holy fathers execrate the same, and whatever today there is of godly men. Therefore not even in this condemnation of the abuses that have prevailed concerning the Mass have we made any admission by which those charges of impious innovation and sedition may stick upon us.

Concerning the rites and external worship in the celebration of the Supper, the churches have always had their own freedom. We use simpler ones, which the earliest Church used, which no one would doubt was far more zealous for true reverence of this sacred rite than those are who today attribute so much to external worship.

Concerning images there remains something to be said. Since our adversaries permit almost everything in connection with them short of open idolatry, they yet accuse us of impiety, though we teach nothing other than that they are not to be adored and that the divine power of God is not to be attached to them, which yet in fact those are doing who make vows to certain statues of the Lady Virgin and of other saints and institute divine honors for them, while they regard other statues of those same saints as worthy of absolutely no veneration whatsoever. We add that images are to be removed where they serve as an occasion for impious cult and superstitious trust in them, just as the most pious King Hezekiah broke the brazen serpent, that notable monument of the great miracle of the divine goodwill shown to the people of Israel, when the people had begun to burn incense to it.

There were ancient catholic saints who judged that it was contrary to the authority of the Scriptures for an image of a man, even of Christ, to hang in the churches of Christians. And we are heretics for wanting removed only those which manifestly stand as a stumbling block to faith. The act of Epiphanius has been approved in ancient times, read in his epistle which Saint Jerome translated into Latin, in which he tore down a curtain which he had seen hanging in a certain church bearing an image of the crucified or of some saint. For he writes that he did not notice it beforehand. What cause then is there for the lovers of images to be so greatly angry at us?

Our adversaries also press us hard concerning religious vows and celibacy, and it is astonishing that they are not ashamed to speak against us on this matter. For where are those priests who are truly celibate, where the monks who keep their vows? I speak of the multitude and of those who today hold the helm of the churches and receive the chief revenues from them. We teach, as all theologians both ancient and recent judge, that only what is certain to be approved by God in each person can be vowed to God, and if anyone has vowed otherwise, that this ought not to be held valid, since we belong to God, not to ourselves. Since today the multitude of those who have vowed celibacy and do not even dream of keeping it is so innumerable, we plainly judge, as Saint Cyprian also did in his first epistle of the first book concerning virgins who had consecrated themselves to God, that it is better for them to embrace holy matrimony than to burn. How few there are who perceive that they are to make themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, the thing itself cries aloud. But to whoever God does not grant this, and who burns, no vow or precept of any man will render null and void this word of the Lord: It is better to marry than to burn. Since it is always the mark of Christians to embrace what is better, no vows can drive them down to what is worse.

But Saint Cyprian calls to the remedy of marriage not only those who cannot but also those who are unwilling to keep celibacy purely and sincerely. His words are as follows: But if they have dedicated themselves to Christ in faith, let them persevere chastely and modestly without any pretext. So let them stand firm and steadfast and await the reward of virginity. But if they are unwilling to persevere or cannot, it is better that they marry than that they fall into the fire through their self-indulgence. Thus he. I know what our adversaries are accustomed to object when we cite that word of Christ, not all can receive this saying: if one cannot contain, they say, nothing is impossible to one who believes and prays. But they themselves in the meantime provide no example of this faith and prayer. Faith and prayer from faith must rest on the certain promise of God, but where has celibacy been promised to us universally?

But let those who truly love purity of life judge between us and these our adversaries. To those who cannot contain, whether simply or because they are not sufficiently willing, we preach this: to avoid fornication let each man have his own wife and each woman her own husband; it is better to marry than to burn. That Paul has not wished to cast a snare upon anyone by urging celibacy; therefore no one can cast a snare upon himself by vowing it. If it is a sin to vow foolishly, let that sin not be compounded by persisting in whorish conduct or by admitting what the court of Rome is infamous for. We belong to God before we can vow anything whatsoever; therefore not to

keep what we have vowed, when it is not profitable to us for living to God, is acknowledged by all the godly to be plain.

But what do our adversaries do? They make no end and no limit of insisting that what has been vowed must be rendered. And though they may read of the vow of celibacy, especially perpetual celibacy, commended by no example of Scripture, while they make many vows dispensable, that is, remissible, they define the vow of celibacy, especially in priests and monks, to be solemn and thus irremissible, even though the Pope has at some time remitted both, while saying nothing about the scandalous and defiled life of priests and monks that is so flagrant meanwhile. All is a game. When the canons even deprive a priest who keeps a concubine, not merely depose him, and would only depose one who had taken a wife, they adorn with the highest dignities those who keep concubines, or rather whoremongers, adulterers, and those worse than these, accommodating the canons to their customs as the builders of Lesbos accommodate their rule to the stones. Bishops of a former and better age excommunicated those who thought any person should be excluded from holy orders on account of marriage. Ours, if someone prefers to be a chaste husband in the Lord rather than a filthy whoremonger with this age, are not content with having deposed him from ecclesiastical office, which the canons command, and which those canons prescribe which were born in a later and even worse period of the Church, but judge that he is to be additionally punished with capital punishment. May the Lord look upon his Church and grant that it may at last be recognized who is working to restore and who to destroy the laws and institutions of Christians.

Our adversaries complain greatly also about fasting, festivals, and other observances of the Church being abolished by us, though there are none who are themselves stirred by less care for these things. It is manifest what freedom the Apostles left to the churches in these matters, and what freedom the churches themselves also once retained without offence. For the mind of Christ and the Apostles was, as is written in the Tripartite Ecclesiastical History, to preach right conduct and the worship of God, book 9. Yet in these matters, provided the purity of the Gospel prevails, we shall strive to become all things to all men. There is certainly nothing that we would prefer more than to see the use of sacred prayers and fasting and other such sacred observances restored in the Church. For what survives among the common people of these things, alas, in no way corresponds to what was handed down by the Apostles and holy fathers. Where today are those who would know what true fasting is, what true repentance, as these things were once in use among the saints? But let us pray the Lord to grant that mind to those who wish to be considered the chief men of the churches, that they may endure to correct those things that entirely subvert piety, things which are such that by reason of them their own canons not only deprive them of the sacred ministry but drive them wholly out of the Church of Christ. There will certainly be no reluctance on our part to restore whatever there is of ancient observances. And if anything beyond this further serves either the severity of ecclesiastical discipline or the more convenient leading of the more simple-minded to a life worthy of Christ, or in any way serves to adorn, order, and most sacredly observe our religion, let it be instituted.

For we seek this one thing, that Christ may reign most widely, and we desire only those things removed that stand in the way of the increase of his kingdom. And all who are able to perceive and are willing as is right to judge of us from what we have set forth in this our Defense will acknowledge this. For who could know better than we ourselves what we think?

But here our adversary confronts us. He first accuses us of having introduced our changes without any prior consultation with the Church. But we were not able to obtain a hearing from any bishops, though we prayed for it humbly and continuously. We wished that with violence laid aside and with good men and lovers of Christ present, it might have been permitted to examine all things according to Scripture. And what weight the common run of bishops carries today, what most theologians aim at, those who love truth, who alone we seek to have our cause approved by, they know very well.

Then when we implore a council, he objects to us: the Church must first be restored to its entirety, despoiled by us of its rite and obedience. But since we have hitherto only attacked with certain and open perversion of obedience to Christ the acknowledged corruptions of doctrine and life, by what deprivation of possession of the Church, I ask, have we driven it out? The Church wills nothing contrary to Christ; it acknowledges no dogma or rite as its own that varies from the decisions of its bridegroom. And those things that agree with the precepts of Christ we have in no way undermined. If anything otherwise has been admitted by us, declare your judgment of it, Bishop. But you yourself know well enough that you can in no way object this in a manner worthy of a bishop, for far better bishops in former times, when any examination of the dogmas or rites of the Church was sought, were not at all reluctant to assemble in the Lord and clear away whatever heresies, however pestilential and seditious, had created disturbance, without any pretense of a prior restoration. You therefore take refuge in this: that it would be in vain for a council to assemble, since matters decided cannot be retried, nor can decrees of one council be shaken by another. But this carries just so much weight as this: how many councils have been convened to suppress the error of the single Arius? Yet it was not necessary that what had been established in earlier ones was rescinded in the later ones. But things that had not been sufficiently explained or persuaded to many in the first assemblies, the holy fathers strove to elucidate more clearly and confirm more certainly in the subsequent ones.

Furthermore, the situation of man is such that even things salutarily established in ecclesiastical matters may be no less salutarily changed at some time, which unless the defenders of the Roman Pontiff admit, under what color will they defend the Church of Christ having been given through them and their ministries so different a face from what it had in Apostolic times? The Apostolic Council, that one at Jerusalem, decreed that one must abstain from blood and from what is strangled; later councils remitted both. The great Nicene Synod judged it a pernicious snare if celibacy were imposed on the ecclesiastical order; later Synods judged otherwise. The Synod of Gangra, following Scripture, declared it anathema if anyone deemed a man unfit for the episcopal office on account of his wife. Has that anathema been respected in the councils that followed? At the Council of Constance it was defined that it is to be held heretical to assert that the authority of the

Pope is greater than the authority of the council. The Lateran Synod decreed the opposite. But why do I waste words here? You, being a bishop, and professing knowledge of canons and laws besides, should have objected something more solid. We are not doing this to have what has been well decided retried, or what has been properly established changed. We seek and strive that what has been piously decided and sacredly established may be vindicated from the audacity of men of evil omen, and restored to its proper place.

Here if any good man should be offended that in the external rites of the Church we have nonetheless permitted ourselves some changes, and should think that what all Christians value so highly and commonly observe ought not to have been changed by a few, let him consider with what superstition the common mass of Christians cling to these very external ceremonies so as to place virtually all of their religion in them, and that this superstition is confirmed by nothing more than by that very so religious and universal observance of these things. The place therefore that these rites and cult are to hold had to be taught to us with singular diligence. Since that excessive and faith-damaging admiration of these things was being defended by the authority of the holy fathers and the Church, we certainly had to do what we read that Saint Paul did when the pseudo-apostles were trying to thrust upon the Christian people the ceremonies of Moses, perversely commended by the authority of the law and of the elder race of Israel, at the cost of faith.

It was therefore necessary to teach that all the power of the Church is for nothing other than edification, 2 Corinthians 10; that Peter and Paul and the whole world are ours, and we Christ's, 1 Corinthians 3; that true worship of God consists in faith and love; and finally that no one is to be judged on account of those external things that are consumed in the very use of them, Colossians 2, and the rest that is contained in these passages. This already required its own examples, so that since our adversaries held tenaciously to their own position lest the freedom of the Gospel be surrendered, the circumcision of Titus had to be denied on occasion, and what superstition counted unlawful had to be openly practiced. And even as we labored the more diligently to set forth the true use of these things, the more obstinately our adversaries defended their superstition and rose up with all force against all the doctrine of Christ. The bishops of the churches could by no reasoning whatsoever be brought to admit any discussion of these observances, making the most openly impious abuses, condemned in their own canons, into Apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions.

Since they had thus rejected us and judged us enemies, and we had not separated ourselves from the other churches, left to Christ our Lord, according to his own words and for such use as could be suited for the edification of faith among our people, we corrected certain things, but only those that could no longer be borne without injury to piety. And we so moderated this correction as to remove nothing whatsoever of those things observed in the early Church or that did not manifestly serve open superstition, and to take up nothing that had not been in use among the Apostles themselves and does not rest upon the certain authority of the word of God.

Here too we permitted ourselves nothing without an imitable example: what Moses, what all the prophets and godly kings have done in those things which had at some time been enslaved to

superstition, even if they had been things that good men could have used well, the sacred letters testify. For among the common people words often do not suffice to bring into true abomination what is superstitious. But why do I spend many words here on defection, in the presence of Christians only? We have corrected nothing whatsoever except according to the word of God and the observance of the better Church. Our adversaries, however, have overthrown almost nothing of the Apostolic doctrine and practice that they have not overthrown most openly, while they have so made men trust in those ceremonies of theirs, profitable indeed to themselves, that they, forsooth, accuse us of impious innovation and seditious disturbance. Let them correct what in their own doctrine and life is in plain conflict with the word of God, without any dissimulation. If the variety of external rites on our part gives offence, yet since in the early and better Church it served the advantage of faith and was taken away in the later and worse Church to the manifest detriment of faith, we, as we said before, will decline none whatsoever of the observances that can in any way be tolerated with the faith of Christ unimpaired.

Furthermore, when we admonish concerning those vices that no good man does not deplore as having prevailed in the Church, this bishop of ours contends that we are not to be admitted because we criminally accuse others, heretics and schismatics of course, and that on this account no license to make criminal accusations must be granted to anyone unless he has first stripped himself of the crime with which he is held. And he cites both canon and law to prove this, as though he had already convicted us of heresy and schism, and the question were whether one who is in a more serious crime ought to be permitted to accuse, rather than whether we are guilty of heresy and schism. We know that nothing is more intolerable than to demand from another an account of his life who cannot render an account of his own. But this I absolutely deny: that we are in any way implicated in these crimes of heresy and schism. And the impurity of doctrine and life that has prevailed in the Church is such that a most severe correction by a synod is necessary: those who truly seek from their hearts the advancement of the kingdom of Christ have not only recently been crying out for this. Christians who are their own accusers from the outset do not seek such refuges. For who does not know how much it matters to the churches that their bishops be blameless? Nor do we say we think no vices whatsoever are to be tolerated in the Church, for we too are pressed hard by our own, alas. But the pursuits of those who are placed at the helm of the churches are so turned in the opposite direction from their vocation that why should I not complain, I who am also Christ's?

But enough of this. Let us be far removed from all faction and sedition in the Church of Christ, from all unsound doctrine and perverse rites. This we have made the first part of our defense. From these things we have set forth our dogmas and institutions, which those zealous for Christ will easily judge, so that this bishop has raged against us most unworthily with these charges.

There is nothing so strong against us in what he has adduced from Augustine concerning the bearing with evils. We will willingly stand within the bounds of that holy man's indulgence.

Then concerning the holy Eucharist we shall give satisfaction, which place our adversary has especially chosen for himself as one in which to discharge against us the bile of his impotence. To

give this some color, he presses my words into service for his accusation, yet against those very words of mine, which he nevertheless repeats so many times, he writes that my aim in what I discuss concerning the holy Supper consists in proving that those most sacred words of Christ, this is my body which will be delivered for you, are to be understood in such a way that in the Eucharist there is not the true body of Christ but only a sign or symbol of it. Now my very words which he cites read as follows: In extending the bread, he says, Take and eat, this is my body which will be delivered for you, that is, just as I give you bread to be eaten by the mouth of the body, so I give you my body to be eaten by the soul. And shortly after he adduces also this further passage of mine: Therefore he provided here the bread to be eaten by mouth and bodily means, but his own body to be eaten by the soul and spiritually. With these my remaining writings on this subject are in full harmony. The exposition of this passage, which this bishop so fiercely attacks, I conclude thus: Where there are true disciples of Christ, Christ will certainly be in the midst of them, truly feeding them, unto eternal life, with his true body and blood. What shall we now say of the shamelessness of this bishop in daring to write of me that my aim in this exposition of the words of the Lord consists in proving that in the Eucharist there is not the true body and blood of the Lord but only a sign or symbol of it? Is this how a bishop should act? Meanwhile nothing more atrocious or savage can be fabricated than what he vomits against us on the grounds of this accusation.

But before we clear ourselves, we must respond in defense of Luther, whom this common adversary calls the source of sedition, whereas we give immense thanks to the heavenly Father, who through him has so wonderfully and happily restored to our age the great truth that all our salvation rests in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ in the sum of the Gospel. Against him he presses with equally shameless calumny. For since Luther, from the fact that the Lord, extending the bread, said, this is my body, affirms that in the holy Supper the body of the Lord is truly given, present, and eaten, while he does not receive transubstantiation, our bishop infers that Luther says Christ is impanated, or as iron is said to be ignited, or as he is incarnate, from which it must follow that there is a communication of attributes between the bread and the body of the Lord. After attributing these things to Luther out of his own dream, he storms against him with extraordinary insults, and all that could follow if someone were to say the bread itself becomes the body of Christ by identity, he scurrilously imputes to the Lutheran position as impious consequences, speaking of God ground in a mill, baked in an oven, lacerated and chewed in the mouth, fallen down into the stomach. And likewise that the bread is immortal, wise, omnipotent, and so forth.

But Luther has taught clearly and at length that in the phrase, this is my body, with this pointing to the bread, the predication is not identical, and affirms only a sacramental union between the bread and the body of the Lord. He indeed adduced the simile of glowing iron, but in this manner, to show that two things are sometimes so joined together that they are in a manner taken as one, the name of each being preserved. For pointing to the glowing iron, one may say, this is fire, and, this is iron. So pointing to the bread of the Eucharist it is rightly said, this is bread, and, this is the body of the Lord, because the bread and the body of the Lord are sacramentally conjoined. So he writes elsewhere: Wine is offered in a cup; these two things, the wine and the cup, when they are in some

manner united, pointing to the cup one says, this is wine, and the demonstration is directed perceptibly to the cup but intellectually to the wine, and to that chiefly. This Luther has asserted: the bread is the body of Christ, not by identity, but that pointing to the bread of the Eucharist, this is the body of Christ, because the body of the Lord is truly united sacramentally with this bread and is exhibited to us together with it.

Now this union, even if, as Luther himself affirms, it is only sacramental and not natural, not personal, and not even formal such as existed between the Holy Spirit and the form of the dove in which he appeared, nevertheless effects some communication of attributes. For what properly belongs to bread, such as being touched, seen, and broken by the teeth, these things are rightly attributed to the body of the Lord by reason of this sacramental union, even though the body of the Lord could of itself suffer none of these things. This communication of attributes I think our adversary cannot deny, since Berengarius confessed it in his recantation by order of Pope Nicolas. So when the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove, although only this form was properly perceived by the eyes, John is nevertheless said to have seen the Holy Spirit. So also when Scripture records concerning the fathers to whom angels appeared that they saw angels, though they perhaps saw only the flame in which those angelic spirits presented themselves to human sight.

This communication of attributes in the Eucharist the holy fathers have freely used. Saint Chrysostom in Homily 83 on Matthew: How many say they wish to see his form, his figure, his garments, his sandals? See, you touch him, you eat him. For in the sacraments, since the invisible things of God are exhibited to us through visible things, these visible things also receive the name of those invisible realities, and through what belongs to the visible things the power of the invisible is explained. For in no other way can spiritual realities be delivered to us. Through his baptism the Lord exhibits to us the washing of sins and the regeneration of the Spirit; here washing and cleansing are assigned to the Holy Spirit, and cleansing the heart and renewing to the water. Hence Saint Augustine says: What power has this water, that it touches the body and cleanses the heart? But in this we do not attribute to the creature what belongs to the Creator, or the reverse. Nor do we make any natural mingling of the glorious body of Christ with the bread, which certain heretics today calumniously press upon us and accuse that sacramental union of unspeakable impiety, for they see that once this is admitted the union of the churches will come about. We are certain that no men can speak better of these matters; the Holy Spirit has set them forth in the Scriptures, and him we will follow, whatever heretics may rave. And to express what the Lord deigns to exhibit through the minister of the Church and through the sacred symbols his spiritual gifts, we will freely call baptism the washing of regeneration and the washing away of sins, and the Eucharist the true eating of the Lord. For truly and through baptism true regeneration and cleansing from sins, and through the Eucharist true communion with the Lord Jesus and feeding unto eternal life, are offered and received.

And so when the Lord said, this is my body, this, which he pointed to, points to the senses indeed toward the bread, but to faith, and above all, toward the body of the Lord itself. Just as that baptismal washing does not of itself regenerate and cleanse from sins, nor is the bread of the Eucharist in itself and by nature the same thing as the body of the Lord, so if anyone pointing to the

sacred washing that is visibly administered says, this is the washing away of sins, similarly this points to one thing for the senses and another for the understanding: to the visible washing for the outward sense, and to the saving renewal of the man for the believing understanding.

In what of these things is there such madness, folly, impiety, or blasphemy as this bishop rages at us with insults? But this is his custom: he attributes to us whatever his hatred of us is able to fabricate, and then storms against us just as if we had been caught and manifestly proved guilty of all of these things.

After Luther he attacks Oecolampadius and Zwingli, to whom he does this honor, that they are not the inventors of a new error, as Luther is, but assertors of an old one, namely the Berengarian, and then he pins this same charge on me afterward. But just as he maliciously perverts the position of Luther, so also that of these men and of me. We indeed deny that bread is in its nature the same thing as the body of the Lord, and we affirm that bread, considered in itself, is nothing other than a symbol of the body of the Lord. But we are so far from denying that the body of the Lord is truly exhibited in the Supper that we condemn in the highest degree of impiety whoever should deny it.

But good men will also say here: if Oecolampadius and Zwingli acknowledged that in the holy Supper the true body of the Lord is present and eaten, and his true blood, and that not merely symbols are exhibited here, but Luther for his part does not make the bread to be called the body of the Lord by identity, from where did that grave contention among these men arise?

The cause of this I believe I know fully, and I will therefore set it forth in good faith. Oecolampadius and Zwingli, wishing in their ministry of the Gospel and sacraments to counter that gross opinion which the common people had conceived concerning the presence of the Lord in the Eucharist, and upon which much superstition rested, expounded that word of the Lord, this is my body, through this: this bread is the symbol or figure of my body. Luther took this to mean that they acknowledged nothing in the Supper but bread and wine as empty symbols of the body and blood of the Lord. For certain others had arisen who in this matter had made practically no use of the symbols. And when Luther denied that there was a trope in these words of the Lord, this is my body, and maintained that it must be taken substantively, Zwingli and Oecolampadius supposed that Luther was positing some natural union between the bread and the body of the Lord.

For with transubstantiation rejected, he said that the demonstrative this points to the bread. But when he said the body of the Lord is in the bread really and corporally, it seemed to them that he was positing a local presence. Therefore just as Luther, because of the interpretation that Oecolampadius and Zwingli put forward, judged them to be leaving only empty symbols in the holy Supper, so these men thought that Luther, from the fact that rejecting the trope he affirmed that the bread in the holy Supper is substantially and corporally the body of the Lord, meant that the bread in its own substance and body is the same thing as the body of the Lord, or that the body of the Lord is locally enclosed in the bread, or certainly united with the bread by some other physical manner, in which opinion concerning Luther I myself confess I also shared. From these causes arose that dreadful strife among these men concerning this sacrament.

Luther defending the true presence and eating of the Lord in the Supper, which however the others did not deny, yet appeared to deny. And the others opposing only a natural union between the bread and the body of the Lord, and a bodily eating of the body of Christ that would reach to the body itself as such, which however Luther never posited, though he appeared to posit it.

But Luther published a little later a fuller confession of his position, in which he wrote explicitly that he posits no other union between the bread and the body of the Lord than a sacramental one, and that it is not just any trope that he rejects here, but only that which excludes the truth of Christ's presence in the Supper, which kind he considers the metaphor to be, while he recognizes a synecdoche here. From this it began to be clear that when he says the bread is substantially, essentially, and corporally the body of the Lord, he does not mean that the bread according to its substance, essence, and body is the same thing as the body of the Lord, as these words were commonly understood, but that together with the bread the true body itself is exhibited in its own substance and essence, though not by a bodily or natural manner, which he excludes by denying that the body of the Lord is here present quantitatively, qualitatively, and locally.

From that time therefore it has always seemed to us that in the matter itself no controversy remains. Concerning the words in which both sides testify that the body and blood of the Lord are exhibited in the Supper, agreement could not be reached among all. For when it is said, the body of the Lord is present and is eaten really and corporally, words that Luther approves, Oecolampadius and Zwingli thought the common people would understand the body of the Lord to be united with the bread by some natural manner, for by corporally is signified quantitatively, qualitatively, and locally. And when it is said: the body of the Lord is present in the contemplation of faith, words that Zwingli used, or is present and eaten by the mouth of faith, words used not only by Oecolampadius but also by Brentius, who is held to agree with Luther in all things, Luther thought that the true presence and eating of the Lord in the Supper was not being sufficiently expressed, for the sense of these words could be that faith is carried toward an absent Christ.

But since we truly believe with certainty that the Lord is present in the Supper and that his true body and blood are here exhibited to us, and we do not doubt that they believed so, and that those who today appear to follow them still believe so, as they themselves confess, we labor to ensure that words from Scripture and the holy fathers be used on both sides, so that we say the body and blood of the Lord are truly present and received, omitting both those ways of speaking by which we might appear to make the Lord perceptible to the senses or to reason, and those by which we might appear to confess him only in the contemplation of one absent. And above all we avoid the words that the Sophists have introduced here. Certainly the manner in which the Lord is here present with us and eaten is mysterious and not of this age. Yet both are as truly and solidly real as could be, so that Saint Paul, after saying that the bread which we break and the cup concerning which we proclaim Christ are the communion of the body and blood of the Lord, subjoined: Since we being many are one bread and one body, all partaking in Christ. From this passage and from what the Lord discussed in John 6 concerning the eating of his flesh, the holy fathers, Hilary, Chrysostom, Cyril, and the rest, affirmed that the Lord Jesus dwells and lives in us no longer only through faith and love

as though absent, but also naturally, carnally, and corporally, because he communicates his own nature and flesh to us, makes us his members, and exhibits all this to us in the holy Eucharist.

Concerning which matter Hilary in the eighth book *On the Trinity* writes: No room for doubt has been left concerning the truth of the body and blood. For now by the Lord's own declaration and by our faith, it is truly flesh and truly blood. And these things received and drunk bring it about that we are both in Christ and Christ in us. Is this not truth? Let it plainly not be truth for those who deny that Jesus Christ is true God. He is therefore in us through the flesh, and we are in him, while that which we are is with him in God. And after certain things: This therefore is the cause of our life, that we have Christ dwelling in us through the flesh, and are to live through him in the same condition in which he lives through the Father. If therefore we live naturally according to the flesh through him, that is, having obtained the nature of his flesh, how does he not have the Father naturally in himself according to the Spirit, when he himself lives through the Father? Likewise: These things have been recorded by us because heretics who hold to a union of will only between the Father and the Son were using the example of our union with God to argue that we too are united to the Son and through the Son to the Father only by the obedience and will of religion, with no property of natural communion through the sacrament of flesh and blood being granted to us, whereas both through the honor given to us of being made divine and through the Son dwelling in us carnally and us being corporally and inseparably united in him, the mystery of a true and natural unity is to be proclaimed.

Likewise Chrysostom in *Homily 45 on John*: Therefore we must speak of how admirable these mysteries are, why they have been given, and what their benefit is. We are one body and members of his flesh and bones. Therefore those who have been initiated ought to obey his commands. And so that we might be turned not only through love but in very deed into that flesh, this is brought about through the food which he has bestowed upon us. For when he wished to show us his love, he mingled himself with us through his body and reduced us into one with himself, so that the body might be united with the head. For this is most characteristic of those who love. Likewise in *Homily 83 on Matthew*: For it did not suffice him to become man, to be beaten with stripes in the meanwhile, but he reduces us into one mass with himself, so to speak, and makes us not his body only through faith, but in very deed.

Cyril on that passage in *John*: I am the life, and so forth: Do you perhaps think that we are ignorant of the power of the mystic blessing? When it is brought about in us, does it not also corporally cause Christ to dwell in us through participation in the flesh of Christ? For why are the members of the faithful the members of Christ? Know you not, he says, that your bodies are the members of Christ? Members therefore of Christ: shall we make them members of a harlot? God forbid. The Savior also says: He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him. Whence it is to be considered that it is not merely by the disposition that is understood through charity that Christ is in us, but also through natural participation.

All these things Oecolampadius received. Zwingli did not reject them. Today there are no churches in Germany, as far as I know, among those that have kept themselves free from human

traditions inconsistent with the Gospel, that do not embrace the same. Indeed Oecolampadius had long since testified that he believed and would declare nothing other concerning this sacrament than what the decree of the Council of Nicaea had established. That decree is as follows: Again also here at the divine table, let us not attend humbly to the proposed bread and cup, but lifting up the mind, let us by faith consider that on that holy table is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, who is sacrificed without blood by the priests, and let us receiving truly his precious body and blood believe that these are the symbols of our resurrection. For because of this we receive not much but little, that we may know that these serve not for satiety but for sanctification. To this decree all the other holy fathers give their assent.

Now this basis of concord concerning faith and doctrine about the most divine Eucharist, namely that both sides believe and speak in the manner we see expressed in these words of the fathers, is being received everywhere, and the dissension that existed is subsiding. For all confess that this saving communion of Christ is so exhibited through the minister and the sacred symbols as to be wholly the work of Christ, who deigns to use the minister as his cooperating instrument and the sacred symbols as certain visible words. For the word, says Saint Augustine, comes to the element and there is made a sacrament, itself also as it were a visible word. All things are perfected by the word, but as that same Augustine writes, not because it is said, but because it is believed, On John, Tract 80.

Now what has been so greatly contended among our people, since we do not doubt that both sides have seriously followed the truth of Christ, will not give so great offence to those who have weighed that stumbling blocks of this kind have always existed in the Church, to the end that those who are approved may be made manifest. The world always seeks causes to repel the truth from itself. The Lord, who came in judgment that those who see may not see, often allows many weak things to be objected by his own people, and so makes his Gospel, which in itself is to the elect the savour of life, become to the rest a savour of death. Nor is it so strange that even the most holy men cannot agree among themselves, and in a matter in which both sides seek the glory of God with sincere heart. This happened to Paul and Barnabas concerning Mark, between whom such a sharpness arose that the one parted from the other. It happened to very many most holy fathers. And it very nearly came to pass that a fierce dispute broke out even between Jerome and Augustine. What prevailed between Rufinus and Jerome is read not without grief of the saints. No one sees all things, and sinister suspicions easily creep in; hence it frequently comes about that however excellent men may be and however great their talents, they cannot nonetheless see the same thing or fully understand one another. Thus the Lord also humbles his own and calls them back from the perverse admiration of men to himself, and by his word more fully binds our minds to himself.

But let us now come to the refutation of those things which the bishop puts forward against us in the cause of the Eucharist. Since from what I have already set forth our faith concerning this most divine sacrament, the good will easily see that the Bishop of Avranches has written everything against us maliciously and calumniously, I will run through his objections as briefly as possible.

First he objects both generally and in particular against us that we depart from the simplicity of the words of the Lord and distort them by a false and impious interpretation, by reason of the fact that we call the bread the symbol of the body of the Lord. But we embrace the words of the Lord most simply, bringing to them no interpretation that they do not produce of themselves. The Lord extended bread and said: this is my body. Two things therefore he here exhibited: the bread and his body. What other meaning can these words of the Lord have than this: through this bread, or, together with this bread, I give you my body to eat? In the exposition which the adversary attacks, I rendered it thus: just as I give you bread to be eaten by the mouth of the body, so I give you my body to be eaten by the soul. What have we assumed in these words that is not contained in the very words of the Lord? That we call bread the sign of the body of the Lord, all the orthodox fathers also said. Augustine against Adimantus, chapter 12: The Lord did not hesitate to say, this is my body, when he was giving the sign of his body. Likewise in the sermon to infants: These things, brethren, are therefore called sacraments because in them one thing is seen and another is understood; what is seen has a bodily form, what is understood has a spiritual fruit. But this man of God scarcely ever speaks of this sacred rite without bringing in that bread is the symbol of the body of the Lord. Saint Jerome writes that the Lord represented the truth of his body and blood by bread and wine, Matthew 26. Irenaeus testifies that the Eucharist consists of two things, earthly and heavenly, in book 4 against Valentinus. In the same manner the other fathers also customarily speak of this matter. We therefore vary from neither Scripture nor the fathers in our interpretation. Concerning transubstantiation below.

Then he also makes common against us, as well as against others, the charge of having revived the Berengarian error. Of this man I have never read anything, nor have I yet been able to know solidly what the matters in his case were. Therefore it is lawful neither to approve nor to condemn him. Let him see what he sang or recanted; let those see who drove him to his recantation. It is written, by your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned. Our writings concerning this matter are extant, and I have set forth the sum of them here; let us be judged by these.

Where it seemed good to this bishop to attack me privately, he first vexes me considerably over what I wrote on these passages: Henceforth I will not drink of this fruit of the vine until I drink it new in the kingdom of God, Luke 22 and Matthew 26. I advise that the kingdom is to be understood as the state of the resurrection, in which the Lord, to confirm the truth of his resurrection, ate and drank again with his own, Acts 10. New wine indeed, because in a new and admirable, even unheard-of manner, since he is now beyond the condition in which food and drink are required. And the Passover I call completed in this, that the Lord rising from the dead passes from mortality to immortality and opened and secured for all of us that same passage. And this understanding I call simple. But the bishop calls it foolish, nonsense involving the truth in rubbish, nothing to the purpose, and he is here wholly occupied in displaying episcopal gravity. Yet Saint Chrysostom has written all these very things concerning this matter.

But let us hear how the bishop expounds this passage. He agrees with us, though with great reluctance, in understanding the kingdom of God as the state of the resurrection. But the completion

of the Passover he makes to be the fulfillment of the promise of a new Passover. The new Passover he makes the body and blood of the Lord in the Eucharist, now immortal, which in the first Supper were still mortal. And when he comes to the adverb new, this, he says, certainly concludes, masterially of course, and says I do nothing to the purpose because I do not explain where the Passover is fulfilled. That I understand new of the drink of common use he refutes on the ground that there is no novelty in it. But the novelty is here when instead of the passible an impassible thing is given.

But you will say, reader, what did the bishop wish to prove by all this? First that what no one denies, the true body of Christ is in the sacrament, not merely a figure or type of the body. Then that the substance of the bread and wine does not remain. But with what mighty consequence does he posit the latter? The Lord said I will drink it new. What else therefore did Christ wish when he deferred his communion with his disciples until after the resurrection itself? Likewise: Would anyone in his right mind understand something else from these words? Such is the way seeing bishops collect their arguments, we being blind heretics. But new, as I said, Saint Chrysostom writes to have the same force here, as it were in a new and unheard-of, indeed admirable manner. For having risen, he says, no longer possessing a passible body but an immortal and incorruptible one, and needing no food, he rose. Other holy fathers understand this, as Theophylact writes, of the full revelation of divinity in the age to come. Equally firm is what the bishop writes, that to complete signifies the fulfillment of a promise. Christ ascended above all the heavens that he might fill all things, that is, accomplish all things. Faith is fulfilled, joy is fulfilled, the law is fulfilled, the measure of sins is fulfilled; in these what did he promise?

Furthermore, since the reading in Luke has, until the Passover be completed, until the kingdom of God come, I point out in passing that this, until, does not in itself imply that the Lord ate and drank after that Supper, though this is plainly mentioned in other places; and I advise this only, lest from this word until, and from other places where this would occur, an affirmation be inferred beyond an expressed negation, or the reverse. This the bishop judged worthy of being attacked with very many quibbles and insults. But perhaps these are the delights of bishops.

He felt that from that, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until I drink it new, it is rightly inferred that true wine remains in the Eucharist, and thus wine, and even bread. And thus what they fabricated concerning transubstantiation vanishes. He therefore responds that new is the same as renewed, that is, transmuted into blood. And lest he appear to say this on his sole authority, he adduces a parallel, as he would have it appear. When the steward tasted the water, it had become wine. Likewise the rod of Moses swallowed the rods of the magicians. Here what was water is called wine, and the rod is called what was a serpent. For he says it is established from the usage of Scripture that a thing changed into another communicates its own name to that other. But where does Scripture so testify that bread is changed into the body, and wine into the blood, of Christ, as there exists Scripture about water that was changed into wine, and a rod into a serpent?

We know the school adduces this argument for its invention. The bread cannot be the same thing as the body of the Lord; yet he said, this is my body; this therefore points to what is contained under the species of bread, or this being, and the bread is transubstantiated into the body of the Lord. But here the scholastics commit a parallogism through the fallacy of ignorance of refutation. For with the truth of this proposition, this is my body, it is not inconsistent that the body of the Lord is here present and exhibited together with the bread that is pointed to. Nor because it is impossible for the bread to be the same thing as the body of the Lord does it necessarily follow that the bread is transubstantiated into the body of the Lord. For the nature of symbolic utterances is different, by which together with the sign the reality is shown and exhibited.

What the bishop has produced so far would alone, he says, suffice to refute my obstinacy. Yet lest he seem to have left anything untouched, he thinks he must proceed. And first he vexes what I prefaced, that I would set forth what I do not doubt has been revealed to us by God and handed down in the open Scriptures, but that I defer the judgment of these things to the elect. O how great sins in these few words. Who, he says, would now doubt that you are driven by an evil spirit? For thus speak those who are driven by an evil spirit. I am most arrogant in claiming supreme revelation for myself, and yet nothing is rightly believed at all that the heavenly Father has not revealed. For flesh and blood, being what they are, are ignorant of the things of God of themselves. But here I contradict myself, since I say things revealed by God are to be submitted to the judgment of the elect, as though anyone should believe through another's faith, and were not bound to recognize the word of God by his own judgment. To what purpose then does Paul submit prophecies to the judgment of those sitting by? Furthermore I am attacked for this too, that I appeal to the elect, whom no one while living can recognize, since no one knows whether he is worthy of love or hatred. Therefore no one could receive the epistle of Saint Peter as written to himself, for he addressed it to the elect strangers, and so forth. Concerning the passage of Ecclesiastes, as above.

Then when I write that Christ wished to assure his own that he would die for the salvation of those who believe in him, he receives this, but as said superfluously.

And he calumniates Oecolampadius concerning the memorial of Christ in the Supper, as though he had wished to prove from it the absence of Christ in the Supper. He adduced that text: you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. But that man has never come to mind of this objection, for he always preached the opposite. Whoever rejects only a bodily and sensible presence does not reject presence of any kind. He then adds that not every meal pertains to this mystery, as though there were any who affirm this. Such is the bishop's pleasure to sport with our reputation, so atrocious and ruinous to us.

But this, reader, I would have you note: how his malice surpasses even his cruelty. He writes that we are striving to make a symbol and a kind of image of the most sacred power of the body. And to prove this lie he adduced these words of mine: In extending the bread, he says, take and eat, this is my body which will be delivered for you, that is, just as I deliver to you bread to be eaten by the mouth of the body, so I give you my body to be eaten by the soul. When he had therefore

undoubtedly noticed that it would appear as the dream of a disordered mind to say that I am striving by these words to make a symbol and a kind of image out of the body of the Lord, since in them I so expressly affirm that the body of the Lord is here given together with the bread, this good man added as if they were my words: for he will now be given as a symbol of my body for your life in death. And lest anyone should suspect that he himself and not I was subjoining this, he added: these are your words, Bucer. And immediately: O most vain of men, and the rest of the perpetual refrain of insults that this bishop sings.

But I wrote thus: just as I deliver to you bread to be eaten by the mouth of the body, so I give you my body to be eaten by the soul, for it will now be given for your life in death. This is the symbol of my body, so that just as you eat the bread received from me with the mouth and put it into the stomach that your life may be sustained thereby and may be able for work, so you may believe in your soul that my body is delivered for you, that from this faith in God may be nourished and strengthened in you, and so forth. I say the body of the Lord was delivered for our life in death, not the symbol of it. But the bread I call the symbol of this body, and not delivered in death but to be eaten bodily, admonishing us thereby that just as bread sustains and strengthens the present life of the body, so the body of the Lord strengthens the eternal life of the new and whole man. Is it not worthy of a bishop in his sincerity to skip over the distinction that comes after those words, namely, for it will be given, that is, my body for your life in death, and to subjoin what belongs to the following period, and so truncate my sentence that I appear to say the symbol of the body of the Lord and not the body of the Lord itself was delivered in death for our life? By what name shall we brand this act? Let the sovereigns go now and put faith in bishops of this kind, not merely against us but against the whole Church of Christ.

Then when I write that Christ taught everywhere that those who believe in him have eternal life, here he says I assume an empty and false thing. Otherwise, he asks, to what purpose are those words of Christ: those who have done good will go into eternal life, and he will render to each according to his works? And if faith suffices, that saying will be vain: the greatest of these is charity. He is delighted with the Vulgate edition, with acorns, of course, now that grain is found.

Finally he says it would be very easy for him to show me a liar in six hundred places of Scripture. But the Lord Jesus himself said: this is the will of him who sent me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life. Now who will deny that our Lord referred all his words and deeds to this end, that we might have eternal life, and that by believing in him, for this is the work of God? And faith alone produces those works for which the reward of life is rendered; faith alone begets love of itself; therefore faith alone is altogether sufficient. For if faith is present, nothing will be lacking of all the things that can in any way serve for salvation. Just as therefore in true faith there is both hope and love and all that can here be sought, rolled up together, so God could in John teach nothing other than to believe in him, and that in this very thing is eternal life. Augustine, On John, Tract 20: What therefore is it to believe in him? By believing to love, by believing to cherish, by believing to go into him and to be incorporated into his members. Charity,

which pleases both Augustine and Chrysostom, is greater than faith and hope because it alone remains. But of these above.

Directly after this I infer: therefore he here provided bread to be eaten by mouth and bodily means, but his own body to be eaten spiritually by the soul. This the bishop writes that I infer emptily, without any preceding proof, as a seedling, so to speak. Rather, he says, I have scattered seed and shall reap a whirlwind.

But since you see, Christian reader, that the bishop here acknowledges that I infer what is true and confesses that the true body of the Lord is truly exhibited to us in the Supper, you have from this whereon to judge his sincerity, in one who so shamelessly attributes to me everywhere a position and faith different from my own. But whether I rightly infer what I here correctly confess from a certain reasoning as well, you judge. My reasoning is of this kind: Christ everywhere taught and did what brings salvation to his own; therefore also in the Supper, when he delivered his body to be eaten. Now all salvation consists in the communion of the body of Christ, that is, in the spiritual eating of him. Therefore in the Supper he gave his body to be eaten spiritually.

But he contends that the Apostles ate the body of Christ with their mouths as well, because it is written, and they all drank of it. We have said above that what belongs to the symbol of the body of the Lord, the bread, is attributed to the body of the Lord by reason of the sacramental union, because the body of the Lord is here exhibited through the bread. Furthermore you yourself acknowledge, bishop, that the body of the Lord is not in the sacrament in a bodily mode, but holds a spiritual mode, namely that by which a soul is in a body, or an angel in a place, about which you write that you would discuss more at length if I held even the first elements of philosophy, and that you will now be singing to a deaf man in vain. If then the body of the Lord is in the Eucharist not in a bodily but in a spiritual manner, as a soul in a body or an angel in a place, how can the mouth of our body reach it, let alone eat it, if we speak properly?

Furthermore he demands from me even a small reason for saying that bread remains in the Eucharist. I will give it therefore: the Lord called it bread, and it is not necessary that it has ceased to be bread by reason of his also having said, this is my body, just as it is not necessary that the water of baptism be changed into the Spirit, for that reason that baptism is called and is the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Spirit. Paul also calls it bread throughout; he adds Lord's indeed, but that does not take away that it is bread. All the fathers frankly acknowledge bread and wine in the Supper. For the change they say takes place here they locate in this: that by it the true body of the Lord is now offered and exhibited to us, which before was nothing other than bread. These are the reasons why we believe that bread and wine remain in the Supper, and why we do not believe in your transubstantiation, which you assert without any reason whatsoever resting on Scripture. For it is by no means necessary that the bread should be the same thing as the body of the Lord if the bread remains here, because the Lord said, pointing to the extended bread, this is my body, which is also the school's chief argument here. For concerning circumcision, through which the gracious covenant of the divine goodwill was being handed down, it was said, this is my covenant, and yet it was not

necessary that the substance of circumcision be changed. In all those forms of speaking by which something is delivered through symbols, one customarily embraces both in mind and in words together both the sign that is delivered and the reality that is signified and delivered, and this latter above all. So when the Lord breathing on his disciples said, receive the Holy Spirit, it is equivalent to saying, receive, this is the Holy Spirit. And if the Lord had used these words, it would still not have been necessary for the substance of the breath to be changed into the Spirit.

The bishop finally comes to that passage where from the fact that the Lord himself testifies that he who eats his flesh in the Supper has eternal life, I infer that the bread cannot be the same thing as the body of the Lord, since many ungodly men eat the bread of the Lord who yet do not receive eternal life. Here he objects Paul to me. For since Paul writes that those who eat of the bread of the Lord unworthily become guilty of the body of the Lord, the bishop contends that the Apostle affirms that the body of the Lord is eaten by the unworthy, and therefore to their judgment. I respond first: this sequence is not firm: one who eats the bread of the Lord unworthily becomes guilty of the body of the Lord, therefore this bread is the same as the body of the Lord. For one who receives the sacrament of the body of the Lord unworthily also becomes guilty of the body of the Lord by that eating, even if the bread is not the same thing as the body of the Lord. Whoever despises one of the least of the Lord, despises him, and yet that least one pertains to the Lord only, he is not the same thing as the Lord. Then when it is pleasing to weigh what kind of persons Saint Paul acknowledges those Corinthians to be whom he here rebukes, it must be confessed that they themselves were held among the members of Christ and had faith. For he calls them brothers; and the judgment into which they had fallen through the carelessness and unworthiness they had admitted he separates from the judgment of the world and makes common with his own. For when we are judged, he says, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. Therefore these Corinthians, though they had eaten so unworthily as to have thereby brought judgment upon themselves, so that many among them were weak and sick, and some had even died, yet because they truly believed in the Lord and were present at the Supper with faith, though insufficiently attentive faith, they were eating the Lord and unto salvation. The judgment into which they fell through their unworthiness was therefore temporary and of fatherly indulgence, so that they were chastened thereby that they might not be condemned with the rest of the world. And who is there who can boast of eating sufficiently worthily and without incurring some guilt? In the holy Supper the greatest benefit of God is exhibited to us; here therefore the greatest reverence, the greatest gratitude, and the consecration of the whole man to the will of God is required. But since the Lord commended this sacrament to us above all for the purpose of promoting in us faith in his redemption, we approach it for this very end, that being strengthened in faith we may eat more worthily at some time, and may abolish all the guilt of ingratitude that we contract by not sufficiently worthy use of this and of the other gifts of God. For only by faith in the death of the Lord Jesus are our hearts cleansed from sins. And this if anywhere is usually renewed here, where the death of the Lord is so magnificently proclaimed and he himself so graciously imparts himself to us, abundantly unto eternal life. For the grace of Christ, since it is sought here, is found here. There is therefore nothing here that conflicts with the words of Paul, for he too acknowledges no eating of the Lord other than the true eating, than that which is always

salutary insofar as it is the eating of the Lord, even if the same eating may sometimes, from the unworthiness that comes along with it, also bring some judgment. Certainly from what the Apostle in the tenth chapter of this same epistle records concerning this sacrament, it is abundantly clear that for him the only true eating of the Lord is that which consists in faith. For he assigns it to those who are the body of the Lord. But what need is there of words? This word of the Lord: whoever eats my flesh has eternal life is equivalent to: whoever truly eats my flesh will live forever. Therefore those who are strangers to this life do not truly eat the flesh of the Lord. Saint Augustine in *The City of God*, book 21, chapter 15, near the end, writes thus: Finally, himself saying, he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him, showed what it is to eat the body of Christ not sacramentally only but in very truth, and to drink his blood. For this is to abide in Christ, that Christ also abides in him. For he spoke it in such a way as if he were saying: whoever does not abide in me and in whom I do not abide, let him not say or think that he eats my body or drinks my blood. He therefore does not abide in Christ who are not his members, and so forth. Thus Augustine.

And as Saint Augustine here teaches concerning the eating of Christ, so we believe and teach. We know that the gifts of God depend on his goodwill and not on our merit, and that they are present to those to whom he himself has promised them. But that the Lord promised and gave his body to his disciples, the Evangelists testify; and to those same disciples he also said, this which is delivered for you, which is poured out for you for the remission of sins. Saint Hilary thinks Judas was not present at the institution of the Eucharist; Augustine holds that with the other Apostles he ate the bread of the Lord, ate the bread of the Lord against the Lord. Then neither sense nor reason reaches to the body of Christ, and the ungodly have no faith and cannot perceive the things of the Spirit of God, 1 Corinthians 2. What therefore shall we say they receive in the holy Supper? The sacrament of so great a thing, but by no means the reality of the sacrament? I speak of the ungodly who believe nothing at all in the Lord. For these things are conveyed through the word, and the word demands faith. We therefore stand by the judgment of Augustine, who moreover in the book of sentences of Prosper wrote thus: He receives the food of life and drinks the cup of eternity who abides in Christ and in whom Christ dwells. For he who is at discord with Christ neither eats the flesh of Christ nor drinks his blood, even if he receives the sacrament of so great a thing daily without distinction to his own judgment of his presumption, and so forth.

For what we read repeatedly in the fathers, that the same thing is given to the ungodly as to the godly, we understand to be true in this sense, that the same thing is offered to them through the minister. But when they write explicitly that the ungodly also receive and eat the body of the Lord, we understand this, as Saint Augustine wrote, sacramentally only, not in very truth. For in very truth, as he himself writes of Judas, they eat the bread of the Lord against the Lord.

Furthermore, when the bishop rages against me violently and with full fury for proving from the fact that the Lord said, which is delivered for you, which is poured out for you and for many for the remission of sins, and likewise of the new testament, that the Lord in the Supper instituted a true and saving eating of himself that belongs to believers only, he teaches me, as one ignorant of the very first elements of theology, what I had long since learned from Thomas Aquinas: that the Lord

suffered sufficiently for all, but efficaciously for the elect. But who does not see that I am speaking here of the fruit of the passion, which reaches only to the elect, namely concerning the remission of sins and fellowship of the new testament? Since the Lord now named explicitly the body and blood which he here exhibited to them, why, I ask, do we sin in assigning this food and drink to these alone, even though the sacraments are indiscriminately received by good and evil? I do not depart from the judgment of Paul in this matter, for I acknowledge that together with the sacrament, and even the reality of the sacrament, those who receive unworthily also contract guilt in respect to the body and blood of the Lord. Yet it always remains true that whoever truly eats and drinks the body and blood of the Lord will live eternally in Christ and Christ in him.

After this he begins to attack the argument I brought against that position which affirms that the bread itself becomes the same thing as the body of the Lord, or that it is naturally and locally transposed and enclosed in the bread. For although the bishop himself also condemns that very position which I oppose by this argument, he nevertheless thought the argument must be perverted by his calumnies, so that he might again provide himself material for episcopal jesting. The argument stands thus: in all the miracles that Scripture records the Lord to have performed, whether bodily or spiritual, each was what it was, with its own certain properties, and appeared to be what it was. So if he restored someone bodily to health, this was clearly manifest and solidly known. If he converted any to himself in soul, this too was revealed in the true fruits of piety in them. Accordingly, since all the works of God that Scripture records have this character, I think I have reason to judge that what he did in the Eucharist has this character too. Since therefore no evident argument reveals any bodily change there, and there is no Scripture that testifies to it, there is no ground for believing that a bodily change was made here.

Against this he objects that water is changed into air without the same quantity and form being preserved, that Eve was made from the rib of Adam, that the rod was turned into a serpent, that Christ was incarnate, that fire is in its sphere, earth at the center, water in the deep, and that no pure element, if it exists, is seen on the outside. But what do all these things have to do with the matter? Does not the air that comes from water appear to be air? Did Eve appear to be anything other than a woman? And so what appeared to be other than the serpent into which the rod was changed? And God was manifested in the flesh to such a degree that the disciples glory in having seen and examined him with their own eyes and touched him with their own hands. Furthermore I do not say that all the works of God are visible, but that they are true and solid and appear to be what they are, if bodily things bodily, if spiritual things spiritual. So I think fire appears to be fire, and so earth, water, and all things, but to those present. Now in what way does the bread appear to have bodily become what the body of the Lord is? I do not require that Christ do nothing without consulting me, but I owe it to believe that he does what he himself testifies by his own word that he does, not what the Sorbonne invents. But we are blockheads who have not even touched the first elements of philosophy, we are blind and deserving of ridicule. You are ashamed of us, you who are entirely philosophy, entirely theology. But believe me, those who read these things will desire to find common sense in you. For you write that I assume ineptly, infer more ineptly, and persuade most

ineptly. Nor can you laugh enough at my proposition as being one to be laughed at and not refuted, and yet you bring forward not even the slightest opposition to any of these things, which nevertheless you introduce with such great superciliousness, as if they were diametrically opposed to my assertion.

But lest you trifle so much, you proclaim to us that Christ, not departing from the Father, can be present in many places, which is not what is in question. For who does not acknowledge this, whoever is a Christian, namely that he is present with all who invoke him from their hearts, but in a spiritual manner, as you yourself confess? Here the sacrament of Christ is being enacted, the reality of the new testament, the reality of faith and the spirit, the reality of heaven, and precisely for this reason, because our mind, still fastened to the flesh, clings to the earth, in order to arouse our senses it is represented and exhibited through bodily, that is, perceptible signs. If you were incorporeal, says Chrysostom, speaking of the holy Eucharist and baptism, he would have delivered these gifts to you naked and incorporeal. But now, since the soul is involved with the body, he delivers to you what is perceptible by the understanding, namely spiritual things, in sensible things. In this manner also Saint Dionysius in the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy speaks of this matter. Hence Saint Chrysostom on the dignity of the priesthood: When you see the Lord immolated and the priest standing over the sacrifice and praying, and all reddened with that precious blood, do you still think that you are among men and standing on earth? Do you not rather immediately pass into heaven and, casting aside all fleshly thought of the soul, with naked soul and pure mind survey the things that are in heaven? Hence also the Church chants: Lift up your hearts. Therefore here nothing of change of place, nothing of descent or ascent of the Lord is to be thought of, and I am pleased with the example of the sun, seen by all eyes of those who see it as present, and of the voice which many simultaneously perceive. Nor here either, bishop, do you have anything to accuse us of reasonably.

He proceeds at last to prove his transubstantiation, and confirms it thus. All the words of Scripture denote the real identity of predicate with subject, unless something else is concluded from an adjunct. In this proposition, this is my body, nothing either precedes or follows that sounds like a figure; indeed the following clause shows the contrary, which is: which is delivered for you. And a little later, placing before my eyes three inferences, he puts forward the first: my body, therefore this bread is the body of Christ. The second: this is my body, therefore this is the image of my body. The third: this is my body, therefore what I present to you and offer to be eaten is in very deed my body. And he subjoins, unless I am stupid, I see the third proposition to be included in the assumed proposition, as the marrow in the bone, the treasure in the chest, the liquor in the vessel. So he waxes rhetorical. But what is there here that gives any credence to the invention of transubstantiation? That no empty sign is exhibited here you may perhaps prove at some point. But that is not what is in controversy. And as to the fact that what is pointed to principally by the mind, the body of the Lord, is identically predicated, and that it is that very body of the Lord, since the Lord was able to give this no less through bread and through the species of bread, what will prove transubstantiation?

So there is no trope in these words, this is my body, when the Lord spoke them, pointing to the extended bread and from it, through the demonstrative pronoun this, by what means, I ask, does

the truth come about? Certainly whoever takes these words simply and understands nothing beyond what is said, to him the Lord will seem to have said that what he was pointing to with his eyes and offering into hands, namely the bread, was his body. But since it did not suit for the bread itself to be what the true body of the Lord is, namely that which was to be delivered to death, and since the Lord had at other times made his flesh truly food and his blood truly drink, it was easily apparent to the disciples that the Lord wished more to be understood here than he expressed in words. Therefore in the words, this is, something else is understood, said with reference to the bread that was extended and pointed to; since something else must be understood from something else, namely from the offered sign the body of the Lord, the reality of the sign, this is a synecdoche. For that is what synecdoche is: when something else is understood from something else.

The same trope is in the words, take and eat, for at first hearing, when spoken with reference to the offered bread, they signify that the bread is to be taken and eaten. But from the circumstances, and from the Lord's own usage, since he had previously discoursed so much concerning the eating of his flesh, it is understood that the body of the Lord also is to be taken and eaten. But because this cannot properly be eaten as food of the body, and what is signified is that from the communion of the body of the Lord that is newly bestowed on the whole man with respect to spiritual and eternal life, which the old and external man receives with respect to the present life through bodily food, at the same time there is in these words a metaphor, namely a transference by reason of the similarity that exists between this inward and heavenly reception and eating, and the reception and eating of bodily food. But in the word body there is no trope. For the Lord says his body and offered that very thing, though to be received and eaten in a different manner from the way things offered sensibly and in the manner of this age are to be received and eaten by the flesh. And hence, because this reception and eating is of the very and only body of the Lord, and such that from it we also become his body, flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones, it can be said that the body of the Lord is here perceived essentially and substantially, provided it is at the same time expressed that that eating is not in the manner of this life and of bodily food, strictly speaking, if one must speak properly. In the word is broken, which Paul used, there is again a metaphor, for this is equivalent to the word is given at Luke, since when the Lord was delivered to death he was, as it were, broken.

It is thus clear that the Lord in his words used tropes in take and eat, and likewise in this is, a synecdoche by which something else is understood from something else, namely from the bread as sign the body of the Lord as the reality signified, that is, what the Lord truly instituted to give truly through the sign of bread. Let those judge to whom it has been given to know the things of Christ.

Under this he adduces these words of mine: Having weighed these things, we shall not simply accept that Christ gave his body to the disciples, but that what they were to receive in soul through faith under bodily signs, as he did with the Holy Spirit, and as Scripture is also accustomed to speak concerning baptism. And what I subjoined a little after, that the words spoken concerning the cup are to be understood in the same sense, and that I affirm this, and those who are willing to be taught by God will affirm it with me. Here see, Christian reader, what spirit of dizziness there is in this bishop. Concerning what I here bring forward, that the body of Christ was given to the disciples

to be received in soul through faith, he writes thus: We receive this position from our heart, yet so as to add over and above that the very true body of Christ is present, that its spiritual and invisible yet real and true presence is of such value to the soul, indeed of greater value, than bodily food can be to the body, and this more happily and augustly, because this food is not converted into the one who eats it but converts its nourisher into itself. Nor do we deny that Christ used bodily signs. Thus our bishop. Now the things he adds to mine, I have so many times testified that we also receive. What therefore, I ask of you, godly reader, what difference in disagreement do you see between us here? He receives from his heart the position that I profess. He understands the words spoken concerning the cup no differently than the words spoken concerning the bread. If he does this rightly, who can be taught by God and think otherwise? God certainly teaches those whom he teaches the truth, and all truth is perceived only with God as teacher. All must be taught of God. Yet that I use the name of being taught by God is extreme arrogance and hypocrisy; I alone glory in the breath of the divine spirit. But this could be tolerated. Let him see that this agrees with what he wrote, that he receives from his heart the position that I professed. Your assertion, he writes, if it were true, it would be necessary that all the holy fathers without exception, even those who shone in life and miracles, who by the judgment of all have been numbered among the saints, had not drawn from God but from an evil spirit the doctrine they handed down to us. Thus the bishop, who after having branded me here with titles of madness and rashness, also puts on the mask of Antichrist. But what shall we do with this brain of his? What I bring forward he receives from his heart. He adds things which are in my assertion just as I affirm them, and not only here but also in the exposition that he attacks, not once but several times; nor is there any controversy between us, if the bishop thinks as he writes, except transubstantiation of the bread and wine, which no ancient recognized, and which recent men like the one of Cambrai and others would have preferred to deny had they not been pressed by the authority of the Roman pontiff. And yet if my assertion is true, the holy fathers will have had to draw their doctrine from an evil demon, and I condemn all before me and make myself alone the catholic doctor and orthodox interpreter of Scripture, and am altogether more blind than a bat, and nothing is not the case. But it was necessary for you to do what at the beginning you promised in the verses of the satirist, for to this bishop Martial the satirist is the Bible: I flee when you pursue, I pursue when you flee; this is my intention. I want what you do not want; I stubbornly do not want what you want.

Now concerning the matter of the Holy Spirit coming with the sign of fire or of a dove, he objects that the words as and like were added, whereas in the Supper they were not. Yet since he acknowledges that Christ gave his body under bodily signs, does not the likeness between the gift of the Lord's body and the Holy Spirit still hold? Therefore nothing varies between us except this one thing, that the bishop makes the bodily signs which the Lord used here to be the accidental species of bread and wine, while we take them simply as bread and wine itself, as Scripture speaks in that place. For no trope is to be admitted in Scripture where no analogy of faith compels it or necessity of circumstances requires it. When therefore Scripture says bread, we understand nothing other than what it says. Nevertheless it is not impossible for God to give his body together with bread, as

together with the species of bread; nor is this proposition, this is my body, any less true if I leave the bread here than if only the species of bread remain. Concerning which, as above. And those words as and like, which are added when the coming and vision of the Holy Spirit is described, take nothing away from the truth of the things by which the Spirit made himself visible, but explain the manner in which he appeared and in what forms.

He also vexes that I said the new testament does not necessarily require ceremonies, though I do not reject ceremonies, for I said they are not necessarily required. For grace is not tied to sacraments. He says I range freely and licentiously in the territory of covenant and testament, and bring nothing that makes for my case, though he was able to refute not a single syllable of those things he himself mentions there, nor do I reject those things he here cites. For they agree with what I wrote from truth. That the covenant of the grace of God, by which the heavenly Father received us as sons, was confirmed by the blood of Christ, and that this blood is therefore called both testament and the blood of the testament.

He proclaims much about the fruit of the Eucharist, things which we truly desire to feel in all of us, for those who communicate rightly are truly fed unto eternal life, and in this nothing at all is in dispute between us. And would that this bishop had fully received this food, for he would have shown himself truer and more humane toward those who confess Christ.

Concerning the signs of the ancients, he contradicts Saint Augustine, for Augustine orthodoxly teaches that the same thing, namely Christ, was prefigured in those signs. The sacraments of old, he says on John chapter 6, were different in their signs but equal in the reality signified.

Concerning the cup he calumniates in his usual manner. I make wine the symbol of the blood of Christ, but I never proclaim that this is also and above all exhibited here. Nor is it absurd that the blood of Christ, the seal of the new testament, should be represented by another sensible sign. The Holy Spirit is likewise the seal, that is, the signet of our redemption and adoption as sons of God, yet is delivered through the visible sign of baptism and the laying on of hands. There is therefore nothing absurd, as the bishop supposes, in a sign of a seal.

Treating the words of Luke and Paul, which have, this cup is the new testament in my blood, I wrote: He calls the cup itself, that is, of wine, the new testament, as circumcision was called the covenant, for it is the symbol of the new testament. Here I speak directly against the Gospel, he says, and add with blasphemous audacity from my own resources that the cup itself, that is, of wine, is the new testament, because Luke says, this cup is the new testament in my blood which is poured out for you. And what Luke called the cup, Matthew called by the name of blood. Here at least blush, caught in your own error. For here the Lord is known making his judgments, when the sinner is taken in the work of his own hands and the word of his own lips. But come now, my bishop, it is permitted to speak with you a little; it becomes a bishop to be forbearing. When the Evangelists and Paul write that the Lord took the cup, did he not take a cup of wine? Wine you will say. For all the fathers infer this from, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine. Now you say the wine ceased in the substance of the blood of Christ, only the species of wine remaining. I, because even after the blood

was presented, it is simply called the fruit of the vine by the Lord, call it the cup of wine, nor do I accept your metonymy here. But let it be here only the species of wine. Will you permit this to be a sign here or not? You confessed it to be a sign. But if a sign, of what? Of the blood of Christ? Yet you yourself write that the cup was called the new testament. Therefore the cup itself, which according to your interpretation, even if not wine, contains at least the species of wine, will be the symbol of the new testament. And you fall into the same snare as I, into the same audacity of blasphemy, and at the same time that absurdity, that the sign of a seal is another sign.

When Luke and Paul write this cup, which word for word is this that cup, we understand thereby certainly what the Lord had taken and which contained wine. We believe that this wine remained and was drunk by the disciples. But we have so many times confessed that when we thus agree with the Lord himself and the Apostle Paul and all the fathers in acknowledging that the wine drunk by the disciples was the symbol of the blood of Christ, we by no means exclude thereby the true exhibition and reception of the true blood of Christ here. For so in my exposition, which the bishop adduced, I subjoined, explaining what I had said: the cup, speaking of the cup of wine, is the symbol of the new testament, for by that cup Christ promised to pour out his blood for the disciples, and thus the grace of God was confirmed to them, and that new and evangelical covenant was struck and established. For just as by this presentation of the cup and by these words, Christ gave them his blood, namely that their sins might be expiated, which he promised in the words, which is poured out for you, so at the same time he made them partakers of the new covenant. Hence not without reason he called the cup, as blood, so also the testament, which was to be confirmed for them by blood. These are my words; now judge, godly reader, whether we have given this bishop cause to storm against us thus.

He also calumniates the word transposing that I used. But I used it only because I was opposing that opinion which locally transposes and encloses the body of the Lord in the bread. Since you wish to be a stranger to this, bishop, why do you stir yourself in vain?

So also you could have tempered your bile there when I write that the Lord nowhere commanded his words to be repeated and the body and blood to be locally transposed into the bread and wine thereby, or any natural change to be made in the bread and wine. For these things too are against those whom you yourself condemn, and you do not deny that the words of the Lord are not to be repeated for the invention of these men. And as Paul and the Evangelists record these things to us, we also take them as to be repeated, namely for this purpose, that we may receive Christ in soul, not that we may enclose him locally in the bread. Philosophers will therefore not laugh so much at my most gross ignorance, as if I supposed that nothing can be in two places without local motion. Nor is there cause for you to send me to the fourth book of the Physics, which I have long since tasted, as it were, along with other things.

He also rages fruitlessly there where I wrote that what enters by the mouth cannot so sanctify as not to defile. Here I am the most insipid babler. Yet certainly since the heart is the seat both of defilement and of sanctification, what is received by the mouth of the body alone and does not reach

the mind, I think can neither defile nor sanctify. But wine drunk immoderately defiles, even if it enters by the mouth, but because it is taken together with intemperance which has come out of the heart. So if the Eucharist is received with religious devotion of heart, sanctification will be received.

When I also say that those become guilty of the body of the Lord who unworthily handle the symbols of the body of the Lord, he infers that I commit contradictions in almost every word. For he says that from this it is inferred that sacred things are to be venerated and that images are to be followed with honor. But who denies this? But what honor, I ask? That you attach some divine power to idols, what manifest idolatry you tolerate? Far be it. The saints themselves, says Augustine, are to be honored for imitation, not adored for religion, and much less therefore their statues and images. But if it is proper to venerate images of the crucified and of the saints, it is so in order that you may allow yourself to be admonished by them of what Christ suffered for you and of what he magnificently worked in the saints for your example. Concerning the adoration of Christ in the Eucharist, he cruelly lashes Oecolampadius in his usual manner, but neither he nor we deny the sacrament its reverence, and wherever we are reminded of Christ, there we adore him, and would that always in spirit and in truth. To this we certainly strive, and we pray the Lord most humbly to grant this to us and to increase it in us daily. But the fact that you have so fastened the faith of the common people and the adoration of Christ to the sacrament that men think they have done something great when they have bent the knee on seeing the bread and cup of the Lord, and otherwise with no concern at all for true adoration and worship of Christ; and lastly that you make the Eucharist when carried about to drive away all evils and bring all good things, often not even mentioning solid faith: all these things we condemn as most pernicious abuses and call our people back from them as far as we can. The Lord said, take and eat, and do this in memory of me, not, show it, carry it about, that crops may come out well, hail may yield to water and fire, the cruelty of the enemy may be warded off, and other inconveniences averted. But just as truly remembering the Lord always and everywhere profits for all things, so no one does not praise the awakening of this faith with due religious devotion through what the Lord has commended to us for this purpose. It is always safe to remain within the Lord's prescription and the usage of the saints.

Near the end he attacks again what I discussed concerning the faith of the Church and submits it to the judgment of Christians. He also attacks me with this dilemma: if you hold it constant and true that your interpretation is correct, why do you submit yourself to the judgment of others? But if you doubt, how can you know that all the elect will adhere to your opinion? I do not doubt that what I have written is true, but neither did Paul doubt that he was prescribing things true and holy when he prescribed that women should pray with covered heads and men with uncovered heads in the sacred assembly, and yet he said, judge in yourselves, 1 Corinthians 11. And in chapter 14, where he prescribes concerning the order of prophesying and speaking in tongues: if anyone seems to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge what I write to you, that they are the commandments of the Lord. So the Thessalonians were to judge what they heard from Paul, though Paul held it indubitable in every way. But these bishops wish all to rest on their judgment, lest anyone detect the fraud they perpetrate in the most sacred religion of Christ.

The bishop concludes his accusation finally as he began it, with destructive calumnies and most inopportune insults. You call, he says, the catholic fathers, holy doctors, most illustrious in life and conduct, assertors of the carnal Christ, sacramentarian heretics. But you shameless one, must be beaten with stone, cut with iron, or burned in fire. With what rashness do you dare to call the fathers of the catholic Church sacramentarian heretics? What have you learned from their life or miracles, you most corrupt scoundrel, most worthy of hanging and the gallows, that should displease you so, that you should think them deserving to be branded with the most atrocious mark of injury? And so forth.

But I wrote not a word in that place about the catholic fathers and holy doctors. For my dispute was with those who said the body of Christ is either united naturally with the bread or locally enclosed in the bread. These I, and not the holy fathers and catholic doctors, call assertors of the carnal Christ, and a carnal Christ, one who thus united with bread is to be offered to our flesh to be carnally eaten, which anyone who reads me will see most clearly. For my text reads thus: But when we urge the memory of Christ as is right, in which our salvation is plainly deposited, the assertors of the carnal Christ cry out against us more than tragically. Concerning which I ask, which of the fathers could we complain of crying out tragically against us who urge the memory of Christ, when they themselves also urge it with the greatest diligence and teach it to be urged everywhere most carefully? But who does not see with whom I have to deal here? The holy fathers and those ancient orthodox writers we so receive in this matter that whatever they have left written concerning this sacred rite, we embrace with our whole heart and receive with both hands, as the saying goes.

From this therefore also recognize, godly reader, that this bishop has once for all resolved to write against us whatever lies and calumnies he could possibly fabricate.

And this too is similar. In closing my exposition and the disputation concerning the Eucharist, which I instituted against those alone who at the time seemed either to impanate Christ or to locally enclose him in the bread, I subjoined an exhortation to charity; and since those adversaries were accustomed to object that too much deference was being shown to human love, and that love ought to follow faith, not precede it, and that God cannot be placed after men, I wrote, anticipating this objection: I do not wish love to be placed before faith, but I wish to admonish, lest anyone think he has faith when he is empty of love. On this little saying of mine seized, the bishop writes: Whether faith is to be placed before love, as it were issuing an edict from a tribunal, and to belch out a twofold heresy, that I place love before faith, and that I deny faith can exist without love. But I do not say this; I concede that men are not to be so loved that you betray faith for their sake. The bishop so twists this as if I were simply denying that love is to be preferred to faith, that is, that love is greater, thereby contradicting Paul. But what is it to calumniate if this is not it? Nor do I think this bishop so illiterate as to commit such a parallogism. But he also sees the effect: that it may not be right to read our writings, which he most earnestly strives to establish as the greatest injustice; he therefore thought himself justified in believing whatever he had been able to fabricate against us.

Concerning faith we have spoken above, which certainly if it is alive, is not without love, and if by nature love has priority, since one must first know God before one can love either him or, for his sake, one's neighbors. Yet love is greater because it always remains. Though this love cannot be absent where one cleaves in living faith to the promise by which adoption as sons of God is promised through Christ, yet God is able, and this was common at the beginning of the Christian era, to breathe his Spirit upon certain reprobates in such a way that, firmly believing the promise of performing miracles, they perform miracles in the name of Christ, and yet are not endowed with true and full faith, nor consequently with love. To this Paul looked when he wrote: if I have faith to remove mountains, and so forth. Otherwise, when he teaches that we are justified and saved by faith, not by works, he plainly so judges concerning faith that it cannot be without love. But since the bishop himself acknowledges that faith without love is dead, he also confesses that faith cannot exist without love. What is dead no longer exists, and cannot simply be called what it was when it was alive. He who does not love has not known God, nor is he of God, says John. Therefore neither does he believe, for he who believes has eternal life. And there the bishop betrayed his dialectic. Paul argues the absence of love in those to whom he attributes faith; therefore faith exists without love. For if someone does not love perfectly, he is in the bishop's view entirely without love.

But why many words? The whole book is nothing but calumnies and insults. And lest this become known to good men, he most earnestly exhorts the leading men of our age and the governors of the Christian commonwealth not to endure hearing us, not even in those things which they otherwise see to be true, unless we first make ourselves suppliants to the Church, that is, to him and bishops like him, prove everything they want, and seeking pardon for our errors, have subjected ourselves to their clemency, of which they daily furnish unheard-of examples in the deaths of so many saints. And if any think we should be heard and some degree of favor shown us, he writes that these persons wish to weave a garment of wool and linen together, to plow with an ox and an ass, to limp on two sides, and to keep one foot outside the Church. Meanwhile, however, he challenges these same persons to have us prove our case and refute his objections. Such is how today's bishops hold what Saint Paul handed down concerning their office.

This will have been sufficient for godly men in reply to all those calumnies with which this bishop has permitted himself to calumniate what we profess concerning the holy Eucharist and what I wrote in my commentary on the Evangelists. For even though I have deliberately passed over a number of them, since he strove to calumniate throughout his entire little book without ever ceasing, yet from those by which we have refuted the rest, they will appear to everyone for what they are. Making an end therefore, I leave the judgment of all to Christians.

The third section of this defense now requires a reply to the insults, but I have perhaps detained you longer than is fair elsewhere. Let these few words therefore suffice. All the insults and jesting of this bishop are aimed at either taking from us the reputation of learning and intelligence, or branding us with arrogance and contempt of better and more learned men, or finally making us infamous for impious doctrine.

To insults of the first kind, by which he seeks to have us regarded as knowing nothing, seeing nothing, being without mind, without sense, complete mushrooms, blocks, and stones, I reply that we are so disposed as to count ourselves blessed when it shall be given us at last fully to learn that we know nothing save Christ and him crucified, and that in the knowledge and understanding of him we daily make progress worthy of our calling.

To insults of the second kind, by which he portrays us as madly arrogant, as contemning everyone before us and claiming all learning and all spirit for ourselves, we testify that even if we can sufficiently displease ourselves, yet we knowingly and deliberately condemn no one; and that we claim for ourselves, beyond this one thing, that the Lord has had mercy on us and by his word has given us whatever faith we have, neither knowledge nor spirit. Yet we cannot follow anything other than what stands as being from the mind of our Lord Jesus Christ, who redeemed us for himself at a great price.

To the insults about impious doctrine, we say that the position we hold concerning all our religion we have set forth in good faith both in this Defense and in our other writings of whatever kind. Let Christians read these and judge, and then let them hold us as they shall judge us worthy to be held before our common Lord and Judge Jesus Christ, before whose tribunal all of us must be brought. May he daily more strip us of ourselves and clothe us with himself, to whom be glory for all ages.

These things it seemed good, most reverend Lord, at the present time to answer on our behalf, or rather on behalf of the doctrine of Christ, against the truly atrocious and monstrous calumnies of the Bishop of Avranches; for it is his defense and not our own that we profess. This we offer to you, Chancellor of that kingdom resplendent with the title of Most Christian, and we beg and pray you through Christ the Lord, whose glory is truly at stake here, that you deign both to read it yourself and to ensure that there be also public freedom to read it. You owe this, as we admonished at the outset and as you yourself easily acknowledge, first to Christ our Lord and to his bride the Church; you owe it to the king and to your kingdom; you owe it finally to your name and your office. You will certainly learn from this, and all who endure to read these things with you will learn, that we reject nothing except acknowledged vices and abuses that have crept into the Church through the sloth and perversity of bishops; and that whatever the sacred letters hand down, and the holy fathers as well, whatever finally the purer and better Church observed, all these things we embrace with the greatest devotion, and account nothing in this life of greater importance than that all who have given their name to Christ the Lord may set themselves to follow these things with their whole heart. You are not unaware that it would be unjust to admit no defense whatsoever of our cause, or rather of the Christian doctrine that we profess, and meanwhile to connive perpetually at this so great wickedness and unheard-of cruelty, by which this bishop and the others of his kind traduces, exposes, and as far as lies in them utterly destroys us as the most criminal and impious of all bipeds, and that by nothing but the purest lies and calumnies, us who are your brothers in religion and friends and allies in civil society, or at least are held to be such by name.

Our adversary cavils about restoring the Church's right over us, about confessing and denying errors, and about seeking pardon before it is proper that we should be heard. But you see that the very question is in controversy, which side has violated the rights of the Church and withdrawn from her authority, and which side finally has entangled itself in errors. We, as we have testified before, submit and devote ourselves and all our affairs to the Church of Christ, and to all those who can represent her and act in her name even according to pontifical law, to be judged, corrected, and if it seems right, even removed. But whether we are knowingly involved in errors and unsound dogmas, let your Lordship judge from this. Whatever there may be in our dogmas and rites that is not drawn from the divine letters themselves, rightly understood by the consensus that the authority of the holy fathers approves, let all such things be already condemned, denied, and devoted to execration by us. There is a saying among our people that there is no word so harsh that it does not admit of being said; so there is no crime so monstrous that it cannot be brought against even the most innocent by bishops of this sort. But who is innocent if accusation alone suffices? Therefore do, as befits both your office and your personal share of power, that our defense may at some time be read in your kingdom, since there are spread about there everywhere such innumerable accusations against us, not legitimate accusations certainly, but most wicked and malicious calumnies. But your heart is in the hand of the Lord, and of all men; he too works all things in all. We will therefore pray to him to grant you, both in this cause and in all matters, to undertake and accomplish what may redound to the glory of our Lord Christ Jesus, and first to the good of the Church of Christ, and then of the king and your kingdom, to which the Lord and our Savior may daily increase his Spirit more and more, that you may at some time truly fulfill that glorious title.

AMEN.

The Defense of the Christian Doctrine against the Catholic Axiom of Robert, Bishop of Avranches.

END.

Page 8, line 22: read totus for toto. Page 23: morbis for mortis. Page 15, line 8: add here: it was indeed the duty of the office and zeal to admonish how greatly this public matter is regarded. Page 16, line 22: durissime for dirissime. Page 20, line 1: ut cognoscat. Page 22, line 10: avertere for evertere. Page 23, line 25: receperit for receipt. Page 26, line 16: delete and. Page 33, line 18: in eo scol for in eo a. Page 46, line 22: necessitates for necessitas. Page 47, line 15: qualis for qualisqualis. Same page, line 20: elevendi for eluendi. Page 59, line 11: cultum for cultus. Page 61, line 9: exultantes for exulantes. Same page: ambierint for ambient. Page 63, line 22: sane monent for sane argumento. Page 70, line 12: sed in for se in. Same page, line 13: possit for possint. Same page, line 29: praeomum for primum. Page 91, line 17: quo eo for quod eo. Page 135, line 5: demonstrativum for demonstratum.

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