



## On the Irrevocable Sentence Pronounced by the Judge upon the Ungodly

### PRAYER BEFORE MEDITATION

My God, I firmly believe that Thou art here present. I acknowledge that on account of my many sins I am utterly unworthy to appear before Thy sacred countenance. Yet, confiding in Thy infinite goodness and mercy, I venture to address Thee, to call upon Thy holy name, and meditate upon Thy commandments, in order that I may acquire a better knowledge of Thy holy will, and accomplish it with more fidelity. Wherefore enlighten my understanding that I may perceive what I ought to do or leave undone for the promotion of Thy glory and my own salvation; at the same time excite my will, that I may repent with my whole heart of my past sins, and resolve for the future to do all that Thou requirest of me. Grant me above all to know Jesus, my divine Teacher and Guide, more clearly, that I may love Him more dearly, and consequently labor, struggle and suffer with greater generosity and self-sacrifice in imitation of His example. Holy Mary, Mother of God and my Mother, show Jesus to me now, and let me study thy divine Son to the salvation of my soul. Holy Guardian Angel, keep far from me all distracting thoughts; my patron saint, come to my assistance. Amen.

### On the Irrevocable Sentence Pronounced by the Judge upon the Ungodly.

In accordance with the exhortation contained in the Gospel of today, (First Sunday of Advent), imagine yourself, my soul, present at the moment when the final act of the awful judgment commences. Behold how the divine Judge turns towards those who are placed on His left, His countenance inflamed with just wrath, and pronounces the sentence of their eternal doom in these despair-inspiring words: **“Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels.”** (St. Matt. xxv. 41.) And when this scene has duly impressed itself upon your mind, consider:

**1st. What an unfathomable depth of sadness there is in those few words the Saviour utters: “Depart from Me!”** Depart from Me, He says, depart from your God and your Creator; depart from Me, your Redeemer and your Sanctifier; depart from Me and from all whom I call My own; from My blessed Mother, who has pleaded in vain for you obdurate sinners; from My angels and saints, to be happy for ever with whom I created you. In order to draw you to Me I allowed Myself to be cruelly pierced with thorns, to be transfixed by nails, to have My heart wounded with a lance. Alas! thorns, in vain you tortured Me; nails, in vain you pierced Me; in vain for these sinners did I shed My blood. “Depart from Me!” Consider, my soul, what this really means; it means to be eternally separated from the Supreme Good, to be eternally cut off from the company of Mary, the glorious Queen of Heaven and of all the saints; and moreover to dwell forever with the devil, to be forever in the society of those who cease not to blaspheme God, to burn forever in the fires of hell. And when you have contemplated, and in a measure realized the awful condition of the lost, consider for your own spiritual benefit that now in this season of Advent our Lord calls to the unhappy sinner: **“Come unto Me!”** If you refuse to listen to this gracious invitation now, you will one day be compelled to listen to the terrible command: **“Depart from Me!”**

**2d. Consider what follows upon the passing of this sentence, “Depart from Me!”** We are told in the Gospel: **“And these shall go into eternal punishment, but the just into life everlasting.”** (v. 46.) A spectacle never before seen since the world was made! At the same instant in which the elect, welcomed by the angels and all the saints, singing hosannas, jubilant and joyous, mount up to Heaven in triumphant procession with Christ in their midst, at the same instant, we are told, beneath the feet of the reprobate the abyss of hell will open, with its terrific gloom and black darkness, its unquenchable flames. A son who is lost will be seen to cast one last despairing look at his father as he beholds him ascending to Heaven; the sister who is damned will once more gaze with anguish of heart upon her brother as he joins the company of the blessed; and for the aggravation of the torment he will suffer in hell, the Religious will for the last time raise his eyes to the realms of celestial bliss, to gain which he assumed the habit, and the attainment of which might have been so easy to him had he closely observed his Rule. He sees hundreds of his brethren ascending to Heaven, while he, amid the heart-rending cries of the lost, the despairing howls of the demons, falls headlong into the jaws of the abyss; they close over the hapless sinner, never, alas! nevermore to be unclosed. **Ask yourself, my soul, where you will find yourself on that day, in the ranks of the elect or of the reprobate?** In order to attain certainty on this point, consider:

**3d. Why must this irrevocable sentence of damnation, “Depart from Me!” be pronounced upon the lost?** The answer is this: Because God cannot do otherwise than banish forever from His presence those who hate Him, and will hate Him forever; and those will hate Him forever who die in hatred of Him, in a state of mortal sin; for we are told that: “In what place so ever the tree shall fall, there shall it lie.” (Eccles. xi. 3.) **O my soul, you are now making this meditation, but can you tell whether you will make the next? And supposing that, will you not ask yourself, if the tree were to fall this very day in your case, where, in what direction would it fall, and what ought you to do, what will you do before this day is ended to secure your salvation?**

#### PRAYER AFTER MEDITATION.

My God, I give Thee heartfelt thanks for all the graces and all the light Thou hast conferred on me during this meditation. Pardon me all the negligence and the distractions of which I have been guilty, and give me strength to carry out the resolutions that I have made. Fortify me, that from henceforth I may diligently practice this virtue . . . avoid this fault . . . perform this action . . . to Thy honor. Help me to do this, sweet Virgin Mary; and if I ever forget my good resolutions, I entreat my Angel Guardian to recall them to my memory. Amen.

*- Meditations on the Life, Teaching, and Passion of Jesus Christ*

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**Come, let us adore the King our Lord, who is to come!**

**Hymn from the Office of Lauds for Advent**

The solemn voice of the Precursor is heard, explaining the obscurity of the ancient figures; let our slumbers cease; Jesus is rising on our horizon.

Let the sluggish soul now rise, and stay no more upon this earth; a new star is shining, which will take all sin away.

Lo! the Lamb is sent to forgive us freely our debt; let us unite in tears and prayers, that we may obtain pardon.

That when He comes the second time, filling the world with fear, He may not have to punish us for our sins, but may protect us in mercy.

Power, honour, praise, and glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Paraclete, for ever and ever. Amen.

**Prayers from the Office and  
the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for Advent**

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto Thee.

Almighty Lord and God, who hast brought us to the beginning of this day, let thy powerful grace so conduct us through it, that we may not fall into any sin, but that all our thoughts, words, and actions may be regulated according to the rules of thy heavenly justice, and tend to the observance of thy holy law. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

V. Incline unto my aid, O God.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

Lord God, and King of heaven and earth, vouchsafe this day to rule and sanctify, to direct and govern our souls and bodies, our senses, words, and actions in conformity to Thy law, and strict obedience to Thy commands; that by the help of Thy grace, O Saviour of the world! we may be fenced and freed from all evils. Who livest and reignest for ever and ever. Amen.

V. O Lord God of hosts, come and deliver us.

R. Show Thy face, and we shall be saved.

V. Show us, O Lord, thy mercy.

R. And grant us the Saviour, whom we expect from Thee.

V. The Lord shall rise upon thee, O Jerusalem!

R. And His glory shall be seen upon thee.

Exert, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy power and come; that by thy protection we may be freed from the imminent dangers of our sins, and be saved by Thy mercy; who livest and reignest God, world without end. Amen.

Hail and blessed be the hour and the moment  
in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in piercing cold. In  
that hour vouchsafe, O my God! To hear my prayer and grant my desires, through the merits of Our Savior  
Jesus Christ, and of His blessed Mother. Amen.

*(It is piously believed that whoever recites the above prayer fifteen times a day from the feast of St. Andrew  
(Nov. 30th) until Christmas will obtain what is asked.)*

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live in such a way that the Good God will always constantly Bless you while He keeps you from all sin. May  
Jesus, Mary, and Saint Joseph obtain for you every grace you need.*