

A Treatise: To Receive the Blessed Body of Our Lord

by

Sir Thomas More

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Page and line numbers correspond to
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A complete concordance to this work can be found at
<https://thomasmorestudies.org/concordance-home/#totbb>

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Spelling standardized, punctuation modernized, and glosses added
by Mary Gottschalk

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Punctuation

The only punctuation marks found in the original printed version of this text are the period, comma, colon, question mark, slash, or “virgule” (/), and parentheses. Quotation marks, semicolons, dashes, exclamation points, and italics have been made use of with the goal of making the text more readily understood by present-day readers. As for the suspension points (...), these are substitutes for many of More’s slashes. He often used a slash where we would use a comma, a semicolon, a dash, or italics; but he also, quite often, used one to indicate whether a certain phrase was meant to be connected more closely with the one preceding it or with the one following it; to call attention to parallel elements in different phrases; or simply to facilitate serious reflection. He also sometimes used a slash for dramatic purposes—to indicate, perhaps, a coming sly comment, or some possibly surprising conclusion. The evident thoughtfulness with which More punctuated this book leads one to suspect that he anticipated its being often read aloud, and wanted to make sure the reader got the cadence right. He writes as though he were speaking.

5 A treatise, *To Receive the Blessed Body of Our Lord... Sacramentally and Virtually Both*, made in the year of our Lord 1534 by Sir Thomas More, Knight, while he was prisoner in the Tower of London; which *he* entitled thus, as followeth.

To Receive the Blessed Body of Our Lord... Sacramentally and Virtually Both

10 **T**hey receive the Blessed Body of our Lord both sacramentally and virtually... which in due manner, and worthily, receive the Blessed Sacrament. When I say “worthily,” I mean not that any man is so good, or can be so good, that his goodness could make him of very right and reason... worthy to receive into his vile earthly body... that holy, blessed, glorious flesh and blood of Almighty
15 God himself, with his celestial soul therein, and with the majesty of his eternal Godhead; but that he may prepare himself, working with the grace of God, to stand in such a state as the incomparable goodness of *God*... will, of his liberal *bounty*, vouchsafe to take and *accept* for worthy... to receive his own inestimable, precious Body...
20 into the body of so simple a servant.

Such is the wonderful bounty of Almighty God... that he not only doth *vouchsafe*... but also doth *delight*... to be with men, if they prepare to receive him with honest and clean souls; whereof he saith,

2, 8, 10 *virtually*: efficaciously 2 *made*: written 10 *which*: who
13 *very*: actual // *vile*: base 14 *glorious*: glorified 16 *may*: can
18, 21 *bounty*: generosity 20 *simple*: poor 21 *wonderful*: wondrous
22 *vouchsafe*: deign 23 *honest*: upright

Proverbs 8:30–31 “*Delitiae meae esse cum filiis hominum*”—“My delight and pleasures are to be with the sons of men.”

And how can we doubt that God delighteth to be with the “sons of men”... when the Son of God—and very, almighty God, himself—
5 liked not only to become the Son of Man (that is to wit, the son of Adam, the first man), but over that, in his innocent manhood to suffer his painful Passion, for the redemption and restitution of man?

In remembrance and memorial whereof, he disdaineth not to take
10 for worthy such men... as willfully make not themselves *unworthy*... to receive the selfsame blessed body into their bodies, to the inestimable wealth of their souls. And yet, of his high, sovereign patience, he refuseth not to enter bodily into the vile bodies of those...
15 whose filthy minds refuse to receive him graciously into their souls. But then do such folk receive him only sacramentally, and not virtually. That is to wit, they receive his very (blessed) body into theirs, under the sacramental sign, but they receive not the *thing* of the sacrament; that is to wit, the virtue and the effect thereof: that is to say, the grace... by which they should be lively members
20 incorporated in Christ’s holy Mystical Body; but, instead of that lively grace, they receive their judgment... and their damnation.

And some such, by the outrageous enormity of their deadly sinful purpose... in which they presume to receive that Blessed Body, deserve to have the Devil (through the sufferance of God) personally
25 so to enter into their breasts... that they never have the grace after to cast him out; but like as a man with bridle and spur rideth and ruleth a horse, and maketh him go which way he list to guide him, so doth the Devil by his inward suggestions... govern and guide the man, and bridle him from all good and

4 *very*: actual 5 *liked*: was pleased 6 *over*: in addition to
7 *restitution*: restoration 9 *memorial*: commemoration
10 *willfully make not*: do not deliberately make 12 *wealth*: well-being
14 *graciously*: in the state of grace; holily 16 *virtually*: efficaciously
18 *virtue*: efficacy 19 *lively*: living 21 *lively*: life-giving
22 *outrageous enormity*: monstrous deviation from moral rectitude
22 *deadly*: mortally 23 *purpose*: intention
24 *the sufferance of God*: i.e., God’s refraining from intervening
27 *which*: whichever 28 *list*: chooses // *inward*: interior
28 *suggestions*: promptings; temptations 29 *good*: i.e., good things

spur him into all evil, till he finally drive him to all mischief. As he did the false traitor Judas, that sinfully received that holy Body; whom the Devil did therefore first carry out about the traitorous death of the selfsame blessed body, of his most loving Master,
 5 which he so lately so sinfully received—and within a few hours after, unto the desperate destruction of himself.

And therefore have we great cause... with great dread and reverence...

to consider well the state of our own soul... when we shall go to the board of God; and as near as we can (with help of his special
 10 grace, diligently prayed for before), purge and cleanse our souls by confession, contrition, and penance, with full purpose of forsaking from hence forth the proud desires of the Devil, the greedy covetousness of wretched worldly wealth, and the foul affection of the filthy flesh; and be in full mind to persevere and continue in the
 15 ways of God and holy cleanness of spirit—lest that if we presume so unreverently... to receive this precious margarite, this pure pearl, the Blessed Body of our Savior himself, contained in the sacramental sign of bread... that, like a sort of swine... rooting in the dirt... and wallowing in the mire, we tread it under the filthy
 20 feet of our foul affections (while we set more by them than by it, intending to walk and wallow in the puddle of foul, filthy

Matthew 8:28–34

sin), therewith the legion of devils may

Mark 5:1–20, Luke 8:26–39

get leave of Christ... so to enter into us... as they

25 Gennesaret; and as they ran forth with them, and never stinted, till they drowned them in the sea, so run on with us: but if God, of his great mercy, refrain them and give us the grace to repent... else not fail to drown us in the deep sea of everlasting sorrow.

Of this great, outrageous peril... the blessed apostle Saint

1 *mischief*: harm 2 *false*: dastardly 3 *carry*: induce to go 5 *lately*: recently

6 *desperate* . . . *himself*: destroying himself out of despair 7 *dread*: apprehension

9 *board*: dining table 11 *purpose*: intention 13 *covetousness of*: lust for

13 *wealth*: prosperity 13, 20 *affection(s)*: passion(s) 16 *margarite*: nacre

18 *sign*: image; appearance 20 *while*: when

20–21 *set . . . it*: think more of them than of it 23, 24 *leave of*: permission from

25 *Gennesaret*: The town of Gerasa was on the eastern shore of the Lake of Gennesaret.

25 *stinted*: desisted 26 *but if*: unless 27 *refrain*: restrain

29 *outrageous*: beyond-measure

Paul giveth us gracious warning, where he saith (in his First
1 Corinthians 11:27 Epistle to the Corinthians), “Quicumque manducaverit
 panem et biberit calicem Domini indigne, reus
 erit corporis et sanguinis Domini”—“Whosoever eat the bread, and drink
 5 the cup, of our Lord unworthily, he shall be guilty of the body and
 blood of our Lord.”

Here is, good Christian readers, a dreadful and terrible sentence...
 that *God* here (by the mouth of his holy apostle) giveth against all
 them that unworthily receive this most blessed Sacrament: that
 10 their part shall be with Pilate and the Jews—and with that false
 traitor Judas!—since God reputeth the unworthy receiving and eating
 of his Blessed Body... for a like-heinous offense against his Majesty...
 as he accounteth theirs that wrongfully and cruelly killed him.

And therefore—to the intent that we may avoid well this importable
 15 danger, and in such wise receive the Body and Blood of our
 Lord... as God may, of his goodness, accept us for worthy... and therefore
 not only enter with his blessed flesh and blood, sacramentally and
 bodily, into our bodies, but also with his Holy Spirit graciously and
 effectually into our souls—Saint Paul, in the place afore-remembered,
 20 *1 Corinthians 11:28* saith: “Probet seipsum homo, et sic de pane illo
 edat, et de calice bibat”; “Let a man *prove* himself...
 and so eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.” But then
 in what wise shall we “prove” ourselves? We may not go rashly to
 God’s board, but, by a convenient time taken before, we must
 25 (as I began to say) consider well, and examine surely, what state our
 soul standeth in.

In which thing it will be not only right hard, but also peradventure
impossible, by any possible diligence of ourselves... to attain
 unto the very, full, undoubted surety thereof... without special revelation

1 *gracious*: kindly; benevolent 7 *dreadful*: fearful // *terrible*: terrifying
 7 *sentence*: judgment 10 *part*: lot // *false*: dastardly 11 *reputeth*: reckons
 14 *importable*: unbearable; intolerable 15 *wise*: a way
 18 *graciously*: grace-impartingly 19 *effectually*: effectively
 19 *place afore-remembered*: above-mentioned passage 23 *wise*: way
 24 *board*: dining table // *convenient*: befitting 25 *surely*: thoroughly
 27 *right*: quite // *peradventure*: perhaps 28 *of ourselves*: on our part
 28–29 *attain unto*: arrive at 29 *very*: real // *undoubted surety*: absolute certainty

Ecclesiastes 9:1 of God. For as the Scripture saith, “Nemo
 vivens scit... utrum odio vel amore dignus est”—“No
 man living knoweth... whether he be worthy the favor or hatred
 of God.” And in another place: “Etiamsi simplex
 5 fuero... hoc ipsum ignorabit anima mea”—“If I be
 simple” (that is to say, “without sin”)... “that shall not my mind surely
 know.”

But God yet in this point is, of his high goodness, content if we do
 the diligence that we can... to see that we be not in the purpose of any
 10 deadly sin. For though it may be that for all our diligence, God,
 whose eye pierceth much more deeper into the bottom of our heart
 than our own doth, may see therein some such sin as we cannot
 see there ourselves (for which Saint Paul saith, “Nullius
 15 sum”; “In mine own conscience I know nothing; but yet am I not
 thereby justified”): yet our true diligence done in the search... God, of his
 high bounty, so far forth accepteth... that he imputeth not any
 such secret, lurking sin... unto our charge for an unworthy
 receiving of this blessed sacrament; but rather, the
 20 strength and virtue thereof... purgeth and cleanseth that sin.

In this proving and examination of ourselves which Saint
 Paul speaketh of, one very special point must be... to prove and
 examine ourselves... and see... that we be in the right faith and belief
 concerning that holy, blessed sacrament itself; that is to wit,
 25 that we verily believe that it is (as in deed it is), under the form
 and likeness of bread, the very, blessed body—flesh and blood—
 of our holy Savior Christ himself; the very selfsame body... and
 the very selfsame blood... that died and was shed upon the
 cross for our sins, and the third day gloriously did arise again

1 *of*: from 3 *worthy*: deserving of 6 *surely*: with certainty
 9 *in the purpose*: i.e., on purpose in the guilt 10 *deadly*: mortal
 15 *conscience*: consciousness / conscience 17 *high bounty*: great generosity
 18 *secret*: hidden 20 *virtue*: power 25 *deed*: fact 26 *very*: real

to life, and with the souls of holy saints fetched out of hell, ascended
and styed up wonderfully into heaven, and there sitteth on the
right hand of the Father, and shall visibly descend in great glory to
judge the quick and the dead... and reward all men after their
works.

5 We must, I say, see that we firmly believe... that this blessed
sacrament is not a bare *sign*, or a *figure*, or a *token* of that holy
body of Christ; but that it is, in perpetual remembrance of his
bitter Passion... that he suffered for *us*, the selfsame precious body of
10 Christ that suffered it—by his own almighty power and unspeakable
goodness... consecrated and given unto us.

And this point of *belief*... is, in the receiving of this blessed sacrament,
of such necessity and such weight, with them that have
years and discretion, that without it... they receive it plainly to their
15 damnation. And that point believed very full and fastly... must
needs be a great occasion to move any man in all *other* points to
receive it well. For note well the words of Saint Paul therein:

1 *Corinthians 11:27–29* “Qui manducat de hoc pane, et bibit de calice,
indigne... iudicium sibi manducat et bibit, non
20 diiudicans corpus Domini”—“He that eateth of this bread, and drinketh
of this cup, unworthily... eateth and drinketh judgment upon
himself, in that he discerneth not the body of our Lord.”

Lo, here this blessed apostle well declareth... that he which in
any wise unworthily receiveth this most blessed sacrament...
25 receiveth it unto his own damnation, in that he well declareth by
his evil demeanor toward it... in his unworthy receiving of it...
that he discerneth it not, nor judgeth it, nor taketh it, for the very
body of our Lord—as in deed it is.

And verily it is hard but that this point deeply rooted in our
30 breast... should set all our heart in a fervor of devotion... toward
the worthy receiving of that blessed Body.

But surely there can be no doubt, on the other side, but that if

1 *hell*: the Limbo of the Fathers 2 *syed*: mounted // *wonderfully*: wondrously
2 *on*: at 4 *quick*: living // *reward*: requite; reward / punish // *after*: according to
7 *bare*: mere // *figure*: representation // *token*: symbol 12 *point*: article / aspect
12 *belief*: faith / belief
13–14 *have* . . . *discretion*: i.e., have reached the age of reason and have that capacity
15 *point*: article (of faith) // *fastly*: firmly 16 *points*: aspects
17 *therein*: i.e., in that passage 23, 25 *well declareth*: makes it very clear
23 *which*: who 24 *wise*: way 26 *evil*: bad // *demeanor*: behavior; comportment
28 *deed*: fact 29 *hard but*: hard to see how it could fail to be the case / callous of us but
32 *surely*: assuredly // *side*: i.e., hand

any man believe that it *is* Christ's very body, and yet is not
inflamed to receive him devoutly thereby: that man were likely
to receive this blessed sacrament *very* coldly, and far from *all*
devotion, if he believed that it were *not* his body, but only a bare
5 token of him instead of his body.

But, now, having the full faith of this point fastly grounded in
our heart—that the thing which we receive *is* the very Blessed Body of
Christ—I trust there shall not greatly need any great information
farther to teach us, or any great exhortation farther to stir and
10 excite us, with all humble manner and reverent behavior to receive
him.

For if we will but consider, if there were a great worldly prince...
which, for special favor that he bore us, would come visit us in
our own house, what a business we would then make, and what a
15 work it would be for us, to see that our house were trimmed up in
every point... to the best of our possible power, and everything so
provided and ordered that he should by his honorable receiving...
perceive what affection we bear him, and in what high estimation
we have him: we should soon, by the comparing of that worldly
20 prince and this heavenly Prince together (between which twain is
far less comparison... than is between a man and a mouse), inform
and teach ourselves with how lowly mind, how tender-loving
heart, how reverent, humble manner, we should endeavor ourselves to
receive this glorious heavenly King—the King of all kings, Almighty
25 God himself—that so lovingly doth vouchsafe to enter... not only
into our *house* (to which the nobleman Centurio... acknowledged himself
unworthy), but his precious Body into our vile, wretched
carcass, and his holy Spirit into our poor, simple soul.

What diligence can here suffice us, what solicitude can we think
30 here enough, against the coming of this almighty King...
coming for so special gracious favor? Not to put us to

1, 7 *very*: actual 2 *were*: would be 4 *bare*: mere 5 *token*: symbol
6 *fastly*: firmly 8 *greatly need*: i.e., be greatly needed
8, 21 *inform(ation)*: instruct(ion) 12, 19 *worldly*: earthly 13 *which*: who
14 *a business*: an exertion of effort 15 *trimmed up*: put in proper order; fixed up
17 *ordered*: arranged // *honorable*: honor-showing; honorific // *receiving*: reception
18 *estimation*: regard 19 *have*: hold 20 *twain*: two 21 *comparison*: similarity
23 *endeavor ourselves*: exert ourselves; make an effort 26–27: See Matthew 8:8.
27 *vile*: base 28 *simple*: pitiful 30 *against*: in preparation for

cost, not to spend of ours, but to enrich us of *his*—and that after so manifold deadly displeasures done him so unkindly by us... against so many of his incomparable benefits before done unto us! How would we now labor, and foresee, that the house of our soul

5 (which *God* were coming to rest in!) should neither have any poisoned spider, or cobweb, of deadly sin hanging in the roof... nor so much as a straw or a feather of any light lewd thought... that we might spy in the floor, but we would sweep it away!

10 But forasmuch, good Christian readers, as we neither can attain this great point of faith... nor any other virtue... but by the special grace of God, of whose high goodness every good thing

James 1:17 cometh—for as Saint James saith, “Omne datum optimum, et omne donum perfectum, de sursum

15 est, descendens a Patre luminum” (“Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, descending from the Father of lights”)—let us therefore pray for his gracious help in the attaining of this faith, and for his help in the cleansing of our soul, against his coming, that he may make us worthy to receive him

20 worthily. And ever let us of our own part... fear our *unworthiness*, and on *his* part trust boldly upon his goodness... if we forslow not to work with him for our own part. For if we willingly, upon the trust and comfort of his goodness, leave our own endeavor undone, then is our hope no hope... but a very

25 foul presumption.

Then, when we come unto his holy board, into the presence of his Blessed Body, let us consider his high, glorious *majesty*... which his high *goodness* there hideth from us, and the proper form

1 *cost*: expense // *of ours*: i.e., any of our wherewithal // *of his*: out of his; with his
 2, 6 *deadly*: mortal 2 *displeasures*: offenses // *unkindly*: heartlessly; cold-bloodedly
 3 *against*: in return for 4 *foresee*: see to it ahead of time 5 *were*: would be
 5 *rest*: stay for a while 6 *poisoned*: venomous 7 *light*: slight // *lewd*: immoral
 8 *in*: on 11 *point*: stage of development 18 *against*: in preparation for
 20 *of*: on; with regard to 22 *forslow*: neglect 23 *willingly*: deliberately
 24 *endeavor undone*: effort not made 26 *board*: dining table
 198/28—199/1 *which . . . covereth*: i.e., which in his high goodness he there hides from us, and covers the natural form of his holy flesh

of his holy flesh covereth under the form of bread—both to keep us from abashment... such as we could not, peradventure, abide... if we (such as we yet be) should see and receive him in his own form such as he is... and also for the increase of the merit of our faith, in the obedient belief of that thing, at his commandment, whereof our eyes and our reason seem to show us the contrary.

And yet, forasmuch as although we believe it... yet is there in many of us that belief very faint, and far from the point of such vigor and strength... as would God it had: let us

say unto him with the father that had the dumb son,

Mark 9:24

“Credo, Domine; adiuva incredulitatem meum!” (“I believe, Lord; but help thou my lack of belief!”);

Luke 17:5

and with his blessed apostles, “Domine, adauge nobis fidem!” (“Lord, increase faith in us!”).

Let us also with the poor publican... in knowledge of our own unworthiness... say with all meekness of heart, “Deus, propitius esto mihi peccatori!” (“Lord God, be merciful to me, sinner that I am!”). And with the centurion,

Luke 18:13

Matthew 8:8

“Domine, non sum dignus ut intres sub tectum

meum” (“Lord, I am not worthy... that thou shouldst come into my house”).

And yet, with all this remembrance of our own unworthiness, and therefore the great reverence, fear, and dread for our own part, let us not forget, on the other side, to consider his inestimable goodness... which disdaineth not, for all our unworthiness, to come unto us, and to be received of us—

But, likewise as at the sight or receiving of this excellent memorial of his death (for in the remembrance thereof... doth he thus consecrate and give his own, blessed flesh and blood unto us) we must

2 *abashment*: embarrassment / discomfiture // *peradventure*: perhaps 6 *show*: tell
 9 *would God*: I wish to God 10 *dumb*: mute 12 *help*: remedy
 15 *knowledge*: acknowledgment 23 *dread*: apprehension 24 *side*: i.e., hand
 24–25 *his* . . . *which*: i.e., the inestimable goodness of him... who 26 *of*: by

with tender compassion... remember and call to mind the bitter
pains of his most painful Passion, and yet, therewith, rejoice
 and be glad in the consideration of his incomparable *kindness*
 which, in his so suffering for *us*, to our inestimable benefit he
 5 showed and declared toward us: so must we be both sore afeard of
 our own unworthiness... and yet, therewith, be right glad and
 in great hope at the consideration of his unmeasurable goodness.

Luke 1:26–42

Saint Elizabeth, at the visitation and salutation
 of our Blessed Lady, having by revelation

10 the sure inward knowledge that our Lady was conceived with
 our Lord—albeit that she was herself such... as else, for the diversity
 between their ages, she well might and would have
 thought it but convenient and meetly that her young cousin should
 come visit her—yet, now, because she was mother to our Lord...
 15 she was sore amarveled of her visitation, and thought herself
 far unworthy, thereto; and therefore said unto her,

Luke 1:43

“Unde hoc, ut veniat mater Domini mei ad me?”

(“Whereof is this, that the mother of our Lord

20 should come to me?”). But yet, for all the abashment of her own
 unworthiness, she conceived throughly such a glad, blessed comfort...
 that her holy child, Saint John the Baptist, hopped in her

Luke 1:41, 44

belly for joy; whereof she said, “Ut

facta est salutationis tuae in auribus meis,

25 exsultavit gaudio infans in utero meo”—“As soon as the voice of thy salutation
 was in mine ears, the infant in my womb leapt for joy.”

Now, like as Saint Elizabeth... by the Spirit of God had those holy
 affections (both of reverent considering her own unworthiness in
 the visitation of the mother of God... and yet, for all that, so great inward

1 *compassion*: sympathy / empathy 5 *declared*: manifested

5 *sore*: very much; seriously 8, 24 *salutation*: greeting 10, 28 *inward*: inner

11 *for*: by reason of // *diversity*: difference

13 *but convenient and meetly*: only appropriate and befitting

15 *sore amarveled of*: extremely surprised by 16 *thereto*: for that matter

18 *whereof is*: what accounts for 19 *abashment of*: embarrassment at

20 *throughly*: through her entire being // *comfort*: pleasure

21 *hopped*: jumped 27 *affections*: sentiments

gladness therewith), let us at this great, high visitation... in which not the *mother* of God, as came to Saint Elizabeth, but one incomparably more excelling the mother of God... than the mother of God passed Saint Elizabeth... doth so vouchsafe to come and visit each of us with his

5 most blessed presence... that he cometh not into our *house*, but into our *self*—let us, I say, call for the help of the same Holy Spirit... that then inspired her... and pray him at this high and holy visitation so to inspire us... that we may both be abashed with the reverent dread of our own unworthiness and yet, therewith, conceive a joyful consolation and comfort

10 in the consideration of God’s inestimable goodness. And that each of us, like as we may well say with great, reverent dread and admiration, “Unde hoc, ut veniat *Dominus meus* ad me?”—“Whereof is this, that *my Lord* should come unto me?” (“and not only *unto* me, but also *into* me”)—so we may with glad heart truly say at the sight of his Blessed Presence,

15 “Exsultavit gaudio infans in utero meo”: “The child in my belly”... that is to wit, the soul in my body (that should be then such a child in innocence... as was that innocent infant Saint John)... “leapeth, good Lord, for joy.”

Now, when we have received our Lord, and have him in our body,

20 let us not then let him alone... and get us forth about other things, and look no more unto him (for little good could he... that so would serve any guest); but let *all* our *busyness* be about *him*. Let us by devout prayer talk to him, by devout meditation talk with him.

Psalm 85:9 Let us say with the prophet, “Audiam quid loquatur in me Dominus”—“I will hear what our Lord will

25 speak within me.”

For surely, if we set aside all other things... and attend unto him, he will not fail with good inspirations to speak such things to us within us... as shall serve to the great spiritual comfort and profit of

30 our soul. And therefore let us with Martha provide... that all our outward busyness may be pertaining to him: in making cheer to him, and to his company for his sake; that is to wit, to poor folk—of which he

3 *passed*: surpassed 7 *pray*: entreat; beg 8 *abashed*: discomfited; taken aback
 8 *dread of*: apprehension about 11 *dread*: awe 12 *whereof is*: what accounts for
 14 *truly*: truthfully 16 *that*: which // *a child in*: a child with respect to
 20 *let him*: leave him 21 *could he*: i.e., would he be capable of doing 22 *serve*: treat
 27 *surely*: assuredly 30–32: See Luke 10:38–42. 30 *outward*: external
 31 *making cheer*: showing hospitality; giving a good reception 32 *which*: whom

taketh every one... not only for his disciple, but also as for *himself*.

Matthew 25:40 For himself saith, “Quamdiu fecistis uni de his
fratribus meis minimis, mihi fecistis”—“That that you

5 have done to one of the least of these my brethren, you have
done it to myself.” And let us with Mary also sit in devout
meditation... and hearken well what our Savior, being now our guest,
will inwardly say unto us. Now have we a special time of prayer:
while he that hath made us, he that hath bought us, he whom we
10 have offended, he that shall judge us, he that shall either damn us
or save us... is, of his great goodness, become our guest, and is personally
present within us... and that for none other purpose but to be
sued unto for *pardon*—and so, thereby, to *save* us. Let us not lose this
time, therefore; suffer not this occasion to slip... which we can little
15 tell whether ever we shall get it again... or never. Let us endeavor ourselves
to keep him still, and let us say with his two disciples that were
Luke 24:29 going to the castle of Emmaus, “Mane nobiscum,
Domine” (“Tarry with us, good Lord”)—and then shall we
be sure that he will not go from us... but if we unkindly put him from
us. Let us not play like the people of Gennesaret... which prayed him
20 to depart out of their quarters... because they lost their hogs by
him... when instead of the hogs he saved the man... out of whom he
cast the legion of devils that after destroyed the hogs. Let not us
likewise rather put God from us by unlawful love of worldly
winning, or foul, filthy lust, rather than for the profit of our soul
25 to forbear it. For sure may we be... that when we wax such, God will
not tarry with us, but *we put* him, unkindly, from us. Nor let us not

2 *himself*: he himself 3 *that that*: that which 5–7: See Luke 10:39, 42
6 *hearken well*: listen well to 7 *inwardly*: interiorly 8 *bought*: ransomed; redeemed
12 *sued*: appealed 12–13 *lose this time*: waste this time / lose this opportunity
13 *suffer*: allow 14 *endeavor ourselves*: make an effort 15 *still*: continually
16 *castle*: village 17, 26 *tarry*: stay 18, 23, 26 *from*: away from 18 *but if*: unless
18, 26 *unkindly*: ungratefully / heartlessly / villainously 18, 23, 26 *put*: drive
19–22: See Mark 5:1–20. (Gerasa was on the eastern shore of the Lake of Gennesaret.)
19 *which*: who // *prayed*: begged 23 *unlawful*: illicit 24 *winning*: gain
25 *wax*: become

do as did the people of Jerusalem... which on
 Palm Sunday received Christ royally and full
 devoutly, with procession—and on the Friday
 after, put him to a shameful passion. On the Sunday cried, “Benedictus
 5 qui venit in nomine Domini!” (“Blessed be he that cometh in the name of
 our Lord!”)—and on the Friday cried out, “Non hunc, sed Barrabam!” (“We will
 not have *him*, but *Barabbas*!”) On the Sunday cried, “Hosanna in excelsis!”—
 on the Friday, “Tolle! Tolle! Crucifige eum!” Surely, if
 10 we receive him never so well, nor never so devoutly,
 at Easter: yet whensoever we fall after to such wretched,
 sinful living... as casteth our Lord in such wise out of our *souls*...
 as his *grace* tarrieth not with us—we show ourselves to have received
 him in such manner as those Jews did. For we do as much as in us
 15 is... to crucify Christ again. “Iterum,” saith Saint
 Paul, “crucifigentes Filium Dei.”
 Let us, good Christian readers, receive him in such wise... as did the
 good publican Zacchaeus, which when he
 20 longed to see Christ... and, because he was but
 low of stature, did climb up into a tree—our Lord, seeing his
 devotion, called unto him and said, “Zacchaeus, come off and come
 down—for this day must I dwell with thee.” And he made haste and
 came down... and very gladly received him into his house. But
 not only received him with a joy of a light and soon-sliding affection;
 25 but that it might well appear that he received him with a sure,
 earnest, virtuous mind: he proved it by his virtuous *works*. For
 he forthwith was content to make recompense to all men that he
 had wronged (and that in a large manner: for every penny a groat);
 and yet offered to give out, also forthwith, the one half of all his
 30 substance unto the poor men—and that forthwith also; by and
 by, without any longer delay. And therefore he said not, “Thou

1, 17 *which*: who 2 *full*: very
 8 “*Tolle . . . eum*”: “Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!”
 8 *surely*: assuredly 9 *never so*: no matter how 11, 16 *wise*: a way
 12 *tarrieth*: remains 13–14 *in us is*: is in our power; we possibly can
 14–15 *Iterum . . . Dei*: Again . . . they are crucifying the Son of God.
 20 *devotion*: piety // *off*: on 23 *not only received*: did not just receive
 23 *light*: capricious // *soon-sliding*: soon-passing
 23 *affection*: inclination 24 *well appear*: be very evident
 24 *sure*: firmly settled; fixed 25 *mind*: disposition
 26, 29 *forthwith*: right away 26 *content*: willing 27 *groat*: fourpence
 28 *and . . . the*: i.e., and even offered, also right away, to give out half
 29 *substance*: wealth 29–30 *by and by*: immediately

Luke 19:8 shalt *hear* that I *shall* give it”; but he said, “*Ecce*,
 dimidium bonorum meorum, Domine, *do* pauperibus”—“Lo, *look*,
 good Lord: the one half of my goods I *do give* unto poor men.”

5 With such alacrity, with such quickness of spirit, with such
 gladness, and such spiritual rejoicing, as this man received our
 Lord into his house... our Lord give us the grace to receive his Blessed
 Body and Blood, his holy soul, and his Almighty Godhead... both into
 our bodies and into our souls, that the fruit of our good works
 may bear witness unto our conscience... that we receive him *worthily*...
 10 and in such a full faith, and such a stable purpose of good
 living, as we be bounden to do. And then shall God give
 a gracious sentence and say upon our soul... as he said upon

Luke 19:9 Zacchaeus: “Hodie salus facta est huic domui”—“This
 day is health and salvation come unto this house.”
 15 Which that holy, blessed Person, of Christ, which we verily in
 the Blessed Sacrament receive, through the merit of his bitter
 Passion (whereof he hath ordained his own blessed body, in that
 blessed sacrament, to be the memorial) vouchsafe, good Christian
 readers, to grant unto us all!

10 *purpose*: intention; resolve 11 *bounden*: duty-bound 12 *sentence*: judgment
 12 *upon*: about // *as*: i.e., what