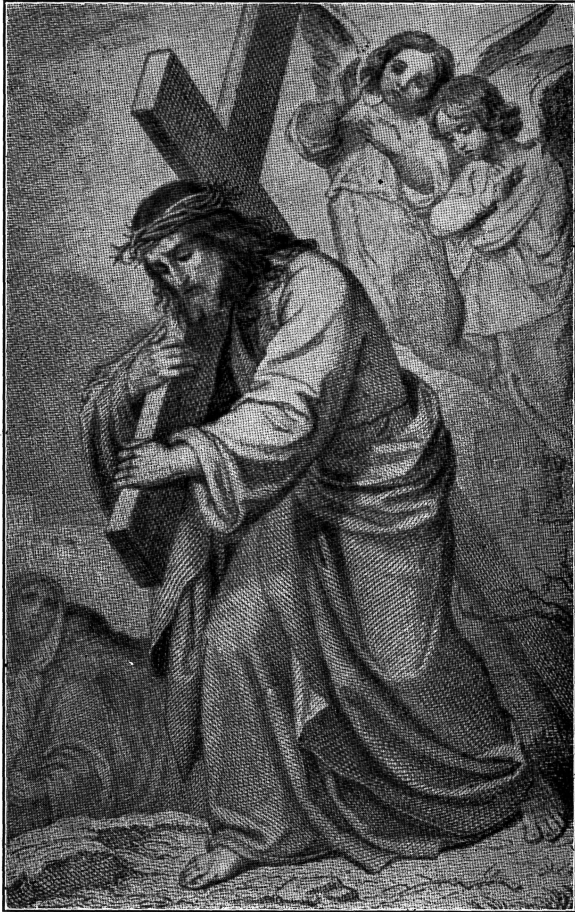


REMEMBER





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“If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself,
and take up his cross and follow Me.”

ST. MATTHEW, xvi, 24.

REMEMBER

Thoughts

on

*The End of Man
The Four Last Things
The Passion of Our Lord
Human Suffering
Humility and Patience*

COMPILED AND EDITED

BY

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NEW YORK, CINCINNATI, CHICAGO, SAN FRANCISCO

BENZIGER BROTHERS

PRINTERS TO THE HOLY APOSTOLIC SEE

1936

Nihil Obstat

ARTHUR J. SCANLAN, S.T.D.
Censor Librorum

Imprimatur

PATRICK CARDINAL HAYES
Archbishop of New York

NEW YORK, May 30, 1936

FOREWORD

HOW SHALL I use this little book? A friendly voice replies: "Open it at sundown, in the morning, in the evening, at any leisure moment; read what you please and as much as you please, but read attentively, reflect seriously upon the thoughts suggested, make a firm resolution to aim persistently at perfection, and pray earnestly that you may become a saint."

* * *

This is the will of God, your sanctification.—
1 Thess. iv, 3.

* * *

I am the almighty God; walk before Me and be perfect.—*Gen. xvii, 7.*

* * *

Blessed is the man that shall continue in wisdom, and that shall meditate in his justice, and in his mind shall think of the all-seeing eye of God.—
Ecclus. xiv. 22.

* * *

Blessed is the man, whose will is in the law of the Lord; he shall meditate on His law day and night.

And he shall be like a tree, which is planted near the running waters, which shall bring forth its fruit in due season.

And his leaf shall not fall off, and all whatsoever he shall do, shall prosper.—*Ps. i, 1, 2, 3.*

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I

THE END OF MAN

REMEMBER

Meditate on the admonition of the Wise Man: "In all thy works remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin."

—*Ecclus. vii, 40.*

Reflect how true it is that the remembrance of the four last things has a marvelous efficacy to restrain the soul from sin, and to disentangle the heart from inordinate affections to the things of this world—to honor, wealth, and pleasure.

Hardened sinners have often been converted from their wicked ways to a penitential life by the terror of these thundering truths: *death, judgment, hell, eternity*. Meditation on these tremendous truths has sent numbers into deserts or religious houses, there to secure their eternal salvation by a saintly life; moreover, the considerations of such sublime truths have generally laid the first foundation even of the most eminent sanctity.

Oh, what lessons may we not learn among the silent monuments of the dead, who attracted attention and made some noise heretofore in the world, but now are thought of no more!

What salutary exhortations may we not daily

receive by attending in spirit the trials at the great bar; by going down while we are alive into the darksome dungeons below, and viewing with dread the torments of the damned; and by ascending up into heaven, and contemplating those blessed mansions of eternal bliss prepared as a reward for the momentary labor and sufferings of the servants of God?

Let us daily frequent these schools to learn the science of the saints. Let us resolve to think often on these important subjects which concern so intimately our everlasting welfare; it will prepare us for a holy death; it will teach us to be always in readiness for judgment; it will keep us out of hell; it will bring us to heaven.

* * *

Remember my judgment: for thine also shall be so. Yesterday for me, and today for thee.

Ecclus xxxviii, 23.

REMEMBER, MAN, THAT THOU ART DUST AND UNTO
DUST THOU SHALT RETURN

Alas! How prone we are to forget this truth! Our relatives, our friends, our acquaintances fall away from us—snatched by the hand of death—and we forget that we must follow them.

“Today for me,” they say, “and tomorrow for you.” Yet we live as though we could count on many tomorrows.

True; I may live to a good old age, but what is a good old age?

You answer: ninety years; and what will ninety years appear when the end comes at last and eternity lies before me! How like a dream, how brief, how fleeting! "All those things are passed away like a shadow, and like a post that runneth on, and as a ship, that passeth through the waves, whereof, when it is gone by, the trace cannot be found, nor the path of its keel in the waters" (Wis. v, 9). Our Saviour warns us to be ready like servants waiting for their master, with loins girt and lamps burning in our hands; for He will come as a thief in the night. "Watch ye, therefore, because you know not the day nor the hour" (Matt. xxv, 13).

It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment. —*Heb. ix, 27.*

Man's days are as grass, as the flower of the field, so shall he flourish. For the spirit shall pass in him, and he shall not be: and he shall know his place no more. —*Ps. cii, 15, 16.*

* * *

The mystery and the horror of death which prevailed in pagan times, and even among the Hebrews before the captivity, no longer exist. To a pagan, death was simple horror. It was the quenching of the cheerful flame of life; the loss of this sun, this earth, and all that can give enjoyment. There was a widespread feeling that it was not utter extinction; but if existence continued beyond the tomb, it was an existence unsubstantial and gloomy, as of ghosts and shadows.

To us who believe, death has many sides. There is much to fear; much to long for; much to labor for; much to trust to God for. Death has its joyful side and its mournful side. Doubtless with the most of us the mournful side predominates, and rightly so. It is not every one who can meet death with a *Te Deum*, like St. Aloysius and St. John Fisher. Considering our sins, the uncertainty of our repentance, the dangers of the last moments, the terrible interests at stake, we have much reason to fear. Death was meant as a punishment for the world's sin. And, therefore, even Christian faith, even the light of Christ's resurrection shining on the open tomb, cannot appease the shudderings, the repugnances, the physical torture of the act and the apprehension of death.

* * *

Let us then go forward, in thought, to the day of our death. It may, indeed, be much nearer than we think. This year, this month, tomorrow, this very night—we know now how soon it may be. For the day and the hour are fixed and certain. Suppose that it has come, and that we lie upon the bed whence we shall never rise. Probably our death will be sudden; sudden in its coming upon us, sudden in its consummation. Experience shows that most men do not expect Death, even when old age or infirmity might have let them understand that Our Lord was knocking at the door.

Let me, then, whilst now there is time, enter seriously into the thought of my wasted life. For