



# MERCY TRIUMPHS

LENT & EASTER

WITH G.K. CHESTERTON



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G.K. Chesterton.

“THE WORLD MOURNS IN BLACK,  
BUT THE CHURCH MOURNS IN  
VIOLET - ONE OF THE MANY  
INSTANCES OF THE FACT THAT  
THE CHURCH IS A MUCH MORE  
CHEERFUL THING THAN THE  
WORLD. NOR IS THE DIFFERENCE  
AN IDLE ACCIDENT: IT REALLY  
CORRESPONDS TO CHASMS OF  
SPIRITUAL SEPARATION.

G.K. CHESTERTON



FEED THE HUNGRY

WHY SHOULD I WORRY  
BECAUSE I DO NOT KNOW  
WHETHER I AM DOING  
GOOD OR HARM WHEN I  
GIVE A MEAL TO A  
BEGGAR? I DO NOT KNOW  
WHETHER I AM DOING  
GOOD OR HARM WHEN I  
GIVE A MEAL TO MYSELF.

G.K. CHESTERTON





GIVE DRINK TO THE THIRSTY

WATER AT LEAST IS A PRIMAL THING,  
AND THE STORY OF IT FLOWS DOWN TO  
US THROUGH THE MOST PRIMITIVE  
LITERATURES, AS THE STREAM OF IT  
FLOWS UP TO US THROUGH THE MOST  
UNCULTIVATED SOILS. [...] IN THE  
PUREST OF HISTORIC PAGES A CUP OF  
WATER IS RECORDED AS THE SYMBOL  
OF ALL THAT IS MERCIFUL.

G.K. CHESTERTON




BEFORE ST. MARTIN GAVE HALF HIS CLOAK TO THE BEGGAR HE WAS A RESPECTABLE ROMAN SOLDIER AND HAD A RIGHT TO ALL HIS CLOAK. BUT IF ON RETURNING TO THE BARRACKS HE FOUND THAT CAESAR HAD LOWERED HIS WAGES A LITTLE, AND IF HE THEN WENT TO THE BEGGAR AND ASKED FOR THE PIECE OF CLOTH BACK AGAIN - THEN I THINK HE WOULD NOT ONLY HAVE LOST HIS POSITION AS A SAINT, BUT LOST EVERYTHING THAT IS SUPPOSED TO BE THE SPIRIT OF A SOLDIER.

G.K. CHESTERTON



WE OUGHT TO BE ACTING ON THE  
ANCIENT AND SANE ASSUMPTION  
THAT HUMAN BEINGS WILL NOT  
ONLY WANT HOUSES BUT HOMES.  
THAT IS, THEY WILL WANT FINAL  
AND PERMANENT HOUSES, HOUSES  
REALLY ATTACHED TO THE  
GROUND, THAT ARE NOT MERELY  
HOUSES ON STILTS ANY MORE THAN  
HOUSES ON WHEELS.

G.K. CHESTERTON



VISIT THE SICK

YOU DO NOT SYMPATHISE  
WITH A SICK MAN AT ALL,  
IF YOU DO NOT  
SYMPATHISE WITH THE  
REALITY OF HIS SICKNESS.

G.K. CHESTERTON



VISIT THE IMPRISONED

ALL CRIME IS A KIND OF DESPOTISM;  
AND THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY  
GHOST IS THE ATTEMPT TO BE THE  
SUPERMAN. ALL PUNISHMENT IS A  
SORT OF RIGHTEOUS REBELLION; THE  
REVOLT OF ALL MEN AGAINST THE  
MAN WHO THINKS HE IS THE ONLY  
MAN IN THE WORLD. IT IS THE  
WHOLE SIN OF THE ANARCH THAT HE  
THINKS HE IS ALONE. AND WE  
ACTUALLY TRY TO CORRECT IT BY  
MAKING HIM REALLY ALONE.


G.K. CHESTERTON



BUT IT IS OBVIOUS, ANYHOW,  
THAT WHEN WE CALL A MAN  
A COWARD, WE ARE IN SO  
DOING ASKING HIM HOW HE  
CAN BE A COWARD WHEN HE  
COULD BE A HERO. WHEN WE  
REBUKE A MAN FOR BEING A  
SINNER, WE IMPLY THAT HE  
HAS THE POWERS OF A SAINT.

G.K. CHESTERTON





INSTRUCT THE IGNORANT

GOD IS MERELY LIGHT  
TO THE MERELY  
UNENLIGHTENED.  
GOD IS A MAN TO THE  
ENLIGHTENED.

G.K. CHESTERTON

WE NEED NOT DENY THAT  
MODERN DOUBT, LIKE  
ANCIENT DOUBT, DOES ASK  
DEEP QUESTIONS; WE ONLY  
DENY THAT, AS COMPARED  
WITH OUR OWN PHILOSOPHY,  
IT GIVES ANY DEEPER  
ANSWERS. [...] THE WORLD IS  
STILL ASKING THE QUESTIONS  
THAT WERE ASKED BY JOB.

G.K. CHESTERTON






BEAR WRONGS PATIENTLY

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH  
SAYS: "ON YOU MORE THAN  
ANYBODY ELSE IS THE DUTY  
OF KEEPING THE PEACE. YOU  
MUST TURN THE OTHER  
CHEEK, YOU MUST SHOW AN  
EXAMPLE OF PEACE AND  
FORGIVENESS THAT THE  
REST OF THE WORLD DOES  
NOT SHOW."

G.K. CHESTERTON








FORGIVE OFFENSES WILLINGLY

THE EVIL OF VINDICTIVENESS  
IS THE SAME AS THAT OF  
EVERY OTHER SIN; IT IS THAT  
IN SOME EXTRAORDINARY  
WAY IT TENDS TO DESTROY  
THE SOUL, TO BLACKEN AND  
EAT UP THE WHOLE NATURE.

G.K. CHESTERTON



GRIEF IS A THING REALLY  
POPULAR; THAT FACT, IF WE  
CONSIDER IT, WILL APPEAR VERY  
NOTABLE AND IMPRESSIVE; AND  
WHEN WE HAVE UNDERSTOOD IT  
WE MAY UNDERSTAND WHY THE  
GREAT VOICE THAT SAID OF OLD  
UPON THE MOUNTAIN: "BLESSED  
ARE THE POOR," ADDED BUT A  
MOMENT AFTERWARDS: "BLESSED  
ARE YE THAT MOURN."

G.K. CHESTERTON



PRAY FOR THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

BUT IF ANYBODY WILL PUT  
HIMSELF IN THE POSITION OF ONE  
PRAYING FOR THE DEAD, OR,  
BETTER STILL, SIMPLY PRAY FOR  
THEM, HE WILL NOT HAVE THE  
SMALLEST DIFFICULTY IN  
UNDERSTANDING WHY THE SAME  
PEOPLE AT THE SAME TIME  
OFFERED PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD  
AND GAVE PENNIES TO THE POOR.

G.K. CHESTERTON



NOT ONE MAN IN A THOUSAND  
EVER SAYS ANYTHING WORTHY  
OF THE DEAD, OR EVEN AT ALL  
ADEQUATE TO HIS OWN  
EMOTIONS ABOUT THE DEAD. IT  
IS A FAR FULLER RELEASE FOR  
HIS FEELINGS TO DO SOMETHING;  
AND ESPECIALLY SOMETHING  
THAT IS NOT TOO UNUSUAL OR  
UNNATURAL TO DO.

G.K. CHESTERTON



FEED THE HUNGRY

DOES THE RICH MAN  
WHO TOSSES A PENNY TO  
THE STARVING BEGGAR  
ASK HIMSELF HOW FAR  
THE PENNY WILL EASE  
THE PANGS OF HUNGER?

G.K. CHESTERTON





GIVE DRINK TO THE THIRSTY

THE WINE THEY DRINK IN PARADISE  
THEY MAKE IN HAUTE LORRAINE  
GOD BROUGHT IT BURNING  
FROM THE SOD  
TO BE A SIGN  
AND SIGNAL ROD  
THAT THEY THAT DRINK:  
THE BLOOD OF GOD  
SHALL NEVER THIRST AGAIN.

G.K. CHESTERTON

MODERN PHILANTHROPY HAS ADVANCED BEYOND THE NARROW NOTIONS OF THE OLD RELIGIONS. IT DOES NOT CLOTHE THE NAKED, BUT PUNISHES THEM FOR BEING UNCLAD. IT DOES NOT FEED THE HUNGRY; IT JAILS THEM FOR NOT FEEDING EACH OTHER. AND IT IS THE HORRID HUMOUR OF THE WHOLE THING THAT THE BEWILDERED INSPECTOR OR MAGISTRATE IS YET OFTEN A KINDLY MAN MERELY TRYING TO PATCH UP AN INCREASINGLY IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION.

G.K. CHESTERTON





SHELTER THE HOMELESS

HOMELESS MEN  
MIGHT OFTEN BE  
GOOD MEN: BUT IT  
WOULD BE BETTER TO  
GIVE THEM HOMES.

G.K. CHESTERTON





WE DO NOT WISH SO MUCH TO  
MAKE A MAN FEEL HE IS A  
SENTIMENTAL MARTYR WHEN HE  
SUPPORTS A HOSPITAL, AS TO  
MAKE HIM FEEL HE IS A SELFISH  
BRUTE WHEN HE DOES NOT. IN  
OTHER WORDS, WE WANT  
CHARITY TO CONTINUE TO BE A  
PART OF COMMON MORALITY,  
AND NOT TO BE MIXED UP WITH  
COMPLICATED CONTROVERSY.

G.K. CHESTERTON



VISIT THE IMPRISONED

BUT WHAT IN THE NAME OF  
HEAVEN (OR, RATHER, IN THE  
OPPOSITE NAME) ARE WE TO  
SAY OF MODERN SOLITARY  
CONFINEMENT? THE MODERN  
PRISONER IS NOT ONLY  
ISOLATED BY DESIGN, BUT IS  
GUARDED AGAINST ANY PITIFUL  
PLEASURE THAT MIGHT FALL  
ON HIM BY CHANCE.

G.K. CHESTERTON






ADMONISH THE SINNER

YOU DO NOT  
SYMPATHISE WITH A  
SINNER AT ALL, IF YOU  
DO NOT SYMPATHISE  
WITH HIS SENSE OF SIN.

G.K. CHESTERTON



INSTRUCT THE IGNORANT

WHEN A MAN REALLY SEES THE CHURCH, EVEN IF HE DISLIKES WHAT HE SEES, HE DOES NOT SEE WHAT HE HAD EXPECTED TO DISLIKE. EVEN IF HE WANTS TO SLAY IT HE IS NO LONGER ABLE TO SLANDER IT; THOUGH HE HATES IT AT SIGHT, WHAT HE SEES IS NOT WHAT HE LOOKED TO SEE; IN THAT PLACE HE MAY GAIN A NEW PASSION BUT HE LOSES HIS OLD PREJUDICE. THERE DROPS FROM HIM THE HOLY ARMOUR OF HIS INVINCIBLE IGNORANCE; HE CAN NEVER BE SO STUPID AGAIN."

G.K. CHESTERTON



A MAN WAS MEANT TO BE DOUBTFUL  
ABOUT HIMSELF, BUT UNDOUBTING  
ABOUT THE TRUTH; THIS HAS BEEN  
EXACTLY REVERSED. NOWADAYS THE  
PART OF A MAN THAT A MAN DOES  
ASSERT IS EXACTLY THE PART HE  
OUGHT NOT TO ASSERT- HIMSELF.  
THE PART HE DOUBTS IS EXACTLY  
THE PART HE OUGHT NOT TO  
DOUBT- THE DIVINE REASON.

G.K. CHESTERTON




BEAR WRONGS PATIENTLY

THERE IS SOMETHING TO BE SAID  
FOR THE IDEA THAT PATIENCE  
AND VIRTUE MUST LOOK FOR  
THEIR REWARD IN ANOTHER  
WORLD. THERE IS NOTHING  
(LITERALLY NOTHING) TO BE SAID  
FOR THE IDEA THAT PATIENCE  
AND VIRTUE DO FIND THEIR  
REWARD IN THIS WORLD.


G.K. CHESTERTON






FORGIVE OFFENSES WILLINGLY

LET US PRAY TO BE DELIVERED FROM  
THE VICES AND VULGARITIES OF OUR  
OWN CIVILISATION; AND ALL THE  
MORE IF WE SINCERELY BELIEVE THAT  
IT IS STILL A CIVILISATION, AND MAY  
NEED TO BE DEFENDED FROM  
SOMETHING THAT IS STILL A  
SAVAGERY. IT IS A FINE THING TO BE  
SWIFT TO FORGIVE OUR ENEMIES; BUT  
IT IS A FINER THING NOT TO BE TOO  
EAGER TO FORGIVE OURSELVES.




G.K. CHESTERTON



COMFORT THE AFFLICTED

WE TRUST THAT EVEN OUR  
SORROW FOR THE DEAD, OUR  
COMPASSION FOR THE  
BEREAVED, WILL NOT DEFLECT  
US FROM SAYING WHAT WE  
THINK WE OUGHT TO SAY.  
WHICH IS THIS: THE PURPOSES OF  
GOD ARE HIDDEN FROM US.

G.K. CHESTERTON








PRAY FOR THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

HOW CAN THERE BE  
FAITH WITHOUT  
SOMETHING TO HAVE  
FAITH IN; HOW CAN  
THERE BE PRAYER  
WITHOUT SOMETHING  
TO WHICH TO PRAY?

G.K. CHESTERTON





BURY THE DEAD

TO SCATTER FLOWERS ON A  
GRAVE IS SIMPLY A WAY IN  
WHICH AN ORDINARY  
PERSON CAN EXPRESS IN  
GESTURE THINGS THAT  
ONLY A VERY GREAT POET  
CAN EXPRESS IN WORDS.

G.K. CHESTERTON



FEED THE HUNGRY

WE HAVE CRIED FOR MANY YEARS  
IN THE WILDERNESS ALONE, THAT  
FOOD IS A PRIMARY NECESSITY,  
THAT FOOD CAN ONLY BE GOT  
FROM THE EARTH, THAT MEN  
MUST TILL THE EARTH AND UNTIL  
THEY HAVE TILLED THE EARTH  
AND PRODUCED FOOD THEY CAN  
DO NOTHING ELSE.

G.K. CHESTERTON



GIVE DRINK TO THE THIRSTY

SPEAKING AS A CATHOLIC, I AM VERY PROUD AND HAPPY TO SAY THAT I KNOW OF NO REASON, IN HEAVEN OR EARTH, WHY A BARMAID SHOULD NOT SOME TIME OR OTHER BE CANONIZED AS A SAINT BY THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. IT IS SIMPLY A QUESTION OF IN WHAT WAY, WITH WHAT MOTIVES, AND IN WHAT SPIRIT SHE MINDED THE BAR.

G.K. CHESTERTON



CLOTHE THE NAKED

I ALWAYS BELIEVE IN THE  
THEORY THAT THE POOR ARE  
ORDINARY HUMAN BEINGS. BUT  
I SHALL NEVER FORGET THE  
MOMENT OF SHATTERING  
ASTONISHMENT WHEN I  
DISCOVERED THAT THEY  
REALLY WERE.

G.K. CHESTERTON



WHEN WE APPEAL TO THE BROKEN  
MEN, WE APPEAL TO THOSE WHO  
HAVE LOST THEIR HOMES AND THEIR  
HAPPINESS; BUT THEY STILL HAVE  
MORE NOTION THAT HAPPINESS  
MIGHT BE FOUND IN A HOME. THERE  
IS MORE OF THIS IN THE HOMELESS  
POOR THAN WE CAN NOW DISCOVER  
IN THE VULGAR COSMOPOLITAN  
CROWD OF THE HOMELESS RICH.

G.K. CHESTERTON






VISIT THE SICK

THERE IS SUCH  
MORTAL FEAR OF  
INFECTION THAT WE  
ARE TO LEAVE THE  
SICK TO SUFFER.

G.K. CHESTERTON





VISIT THE IMPRISONED

A MODERN PRISON IS  
ALWAYS INHUMAN,  
EVEN WHEN IT IS NOT  
INHUMANE.

G.K. CHESTERTON




G.K. Chesterton  
chesterton.org



IT SOMETIMES DOES PEOPLE GOOD  
TO PUNISH THEM. IT OFTEN,  
PROBABLY MORE OFTEN, DOES  
THEM GOOD TO PARDON THEM. IT  
MORE OFTEN DOES THEM GOOD  
TO UNDERSTAND THEM, AND SO  
ABSOLVE THEM WITH A SERIOUS  
SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY.

G.K. CHESTERTON






INSTRUCT THE IGNORANT

FOR GOD IS BY ITS NATURE  
A NAME OF MYSTERY, AND  
NOBODY EVER SUPPOSED  
THAT MAN COULD IMAGINE  
HOW A WORLD WAS  
CREATED ANY MORE THAT  
HE COULD CREATE ONE.

G.K. CHESTERTON

I CAN UNDERTAKE TO JUSTIFY THE  
WHOLE CATHOLIC THEOLOGY, IF I BE  
GRANTED TO START WITH THE  
SUPREME SACREDNESS AND VALUE OF  
TWO THINGS: REASON AND LIBERTY.  
IT IS AN ILLUMINATING COMMENT ON  
CURRENT ANTI-CATHOLIC TALK  
THAT THEY ARE THE TWO THINGS  
WHICH MOST PEOPLE IMAGINE TO BE  
FORBIDDEN TO CATHOLICS.

G.K. CHESTERTON






BEAR WRONGS PATIENTLY

SYMPATHY MEANS  
UNDERSTANDING,  
AND PATIENCE MEANS  
SELF-CONTROL.


G.K. CHESTERTON





FORGIVE OFFENSES WILLINGLY

WE ALL ACCEPT THAT  
ARDUOUS AND  
DIFFICULT IDEAL  
WHICH TELLS US  
THAT WE MUST  
FORGIVE THE CRIMES  
OF OUR ENEMIES.




G.K. CHESTERTON



G.K. Chesterton  
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PESSIMISM IS A THING WHICH IS  
LEARNT FROM BOOKS AS  
SORROW IS A THING LEARNT  
FROM LIFE. SORROW CAN NEVER  
BE PESSIMISTIC, FOR IT IS  
FOUNDED UPON THE VALUE OF  
THINGS. NO ONE CAN BE FINALLY  
MISERABLE WHO HAS EVER  
KNOWN ANYTHING WORTH  
BEING MISERABLE ABOUT.

G.K. CHESTERTON





PRAY FOR THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

AS A MATTER OF FACT, IT IS  
A VERY GOOD THING FOR US  
TO BE COMPELLED TO WAIT  
IF IT MEANS THAT WE ARE  
COMPELLED TO WATCH; I AM  
EVEN TEMPTED TO ADD, TO  
WATCH AND PRAY.

G.K. CHESTERTON

WHEN, THEREFORE, WE WATCH  
SOME POPULAR POMP GO BY,  
ESPECIALLY A POMP OF  
LAMENTATION LIKE THAT WHICH  
HAS RECENTLY PASSED THROUGH  
OUR STREETS, LET US THINK NOT  
ONLY OF THE VIRTUES OF THE  
DEAD, BUT OF THE LIVING; AND  
ABOVE ALL OF THAT UNIVERSAL  
HUMAN VIRTUE OF VENERATION  
FOR THE DEAD.

G.K. CHESTERTON







FEED THE HUNGRY

[AQUINAS] HAD FROM THE  
FIRST THAT FULL AND FINAL  
TEST OF TRULY ORTHODOX  
CATHOLICITY; THE IMPETUOUS,  
IMPATIENT, INTOLERANT  
PASSION FOR THE POOR; AND  
EVEN THAT READINESS TO BE  
RATHER A NUISANCE TO THE  
RICH, OUT OF A HUNGER TO  
FEED THE HUNGRY.

G.K. CHESTERTON



  
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GIVE DRINK TO THE THIRSTY

CATHOLICS BELIEVE THAT IN  
THE BLESSED SACRAMENT  
CHRIST IS PRESENT, NOT  
MERELY AS A THOUGHT IS  
PRESENT IN A MIND, BUT AS  
A PERSON IS PRESENT IN A  
ROOM, VEILED ONLY FROM  
THE ACTUAL SENSES BY  
THE APPEARANCES OF  
BREAD AND WINE.

G.K. CHESTERTON



*G.K. Chesterton*  
chesterton.org



CLOTHE THE NAKED

I SHALL CONTINUE TO  
KEEP MY MONEY FOR  
ANYONE I MEET WHO  
LOOKS AS IF HE  
REQUIRED IT.

G.K. CHESTERTON





SHELTER THE HOMELESS

AS WE SHOULD BE GENUINELY  
SORRY FOR TRAMPS AND  
PAUPERS WHO ARE MATERIALLY  
HOMELESS, SO WE SHOULD BE  
SORRY FOR THOSE WHO ARE  
MORALLY HOMELESS, AND WHO  
SUFFER A PHILOSOPHICAL  
STARVATION AS DEADLY AS  
PHYSICAL STARVATION.

G.K. CHESTERTON





VISIT THE SICK

IF ANY HUMAN ACTS MAY LOOSELY  
BE CALLED CAUSELESS, THEY ARE  
THE MINOR ACTS OF A HEALTHY  
MAN; WHISTLING AS HE WALKS;  
SLASHING THE GRASS WITH A  
STICK; KICKING HIS HEELS OR  
RUBBING HIS HANDS. IT IS THE  
HAPPY MAN WHO DOES THE  
USELESS THINGS; THE SICK MAN IS  
NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO BE IDLE.

G.K. CHESTERTON





VISIT THE IMPRISONED

ON THE WHOLE, PEOPLE ARE  
BETTER (PHYSICALLY) FOR  
GOING TO HOSPITALS WHEN  
THEY ARE ILL. IT CANNOT BE  
SHOWN THAT THEY DO  
BETTER FOR GOING TO  
PRISONS WHEN THEY DO ILL.

G.K. CHESTERTON





ADMONISH THE SINNER

BUT HE HAS THE MOST  
IRONICAL, THE MOST  
TERRIBLE, THE MOST  
UNQUESTIONABLE OF ALL  
RIGHTS TO CONDEMN A  
SIN; THE RIGHT OF THE  
SINNER WHO HAS TRIED IT.

G.K. CHESTERTON





INSTRUCT THE IGNORANT

THERE IS ONLY ONE  
THING IN THE WORLD  
THAT DIES AND DOES NOT  
DIE. AND WITH THEIR  
OWN BLIND EYES THESE  
SKEPTICS HAVE SEEN IT,  
COMING AGAIN OUT OF  
THE GATES OF DEATH.

G.K. CHESTERTON







COUNSEL THE DOUBTFUL

BUT WHEN A MAN IS  
DIRECTLY ASKED ABOUT  
HIS RELIGION, THAT IS,  
HIS SENSE OF THE  
SUPREME TRUTH, HE  
MUST TESTIFY; EVEN IF  
HIS TESTIMONY IS  
ENTIRELY UNPOPULAR.

G.K. CHESTERTON





BEAR WRONGS PATIENTLY

AFTER NEARLY TWO  
THOUSAND YEARS, [...] CATHOLICS  
HAVE COME TO REGARD CATHOLICISM AS ONE  
THING, ALL THE PARTS OF WHICH ARE IN ONE SENSE  
EQUALLY ASSAILED AND IN ANOTHER SENSE EQUALLY  
UNASSAILABLE.

G.K. CHESTERTON





FORGIVE OFFENSES WILLINGLY

I THINK IT A COLOSSAL  
FACT THAT THE CHURCH  
CREATED A MACHINERY OF  
PARDON, WHERE THE  
STATE COULD ONLY WORK  
BY A MACHINERY OF  
PUNISHMENT.

G.K. CHESTERTON





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# MERCY TRIUMPHS

LENT & EASTER

WITH G.K. CHESTERTON

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A stylized, handwritten signature of G.K. Chesterton in a dark brown color.