

MERCY TRIUMPHS

LENT & EASTER
WITH G.K. CHESTERTON



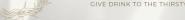


"THE WORLD MOURNS IN BLACK. BUT THE CHURCH MOURNS IN VIOLET - ONE OF THE MANY INSTANCES OF THE FACT THAT THE CHURCH IS A MUCH MORE CHEERFUL THING THAN THE WORLD, NOR IS THE DIFFERENCE AN IDLE ACCIDENT: IT REALLY CORRESPONDS TO CHASMS OF SPIRITUAL SEPARATION



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.





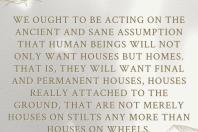
WATER AT LEAST IS A PRIMAL THING. AND THE STORY OF IT FLOWS DOWN TO US THROUGH THE MOST PRIMITIVE LITERATURES, AS THE STREAM OF IT FLOWS UP TO US THROUGH THE MOST UNCULTIVATED SOILS. [...] IN THE PUREST OF HISTORIC PAGES A CUP OF WATER IS RECORDED AS THE SYMBOL OF ALL THAT IS MERCIFUL



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

GIR CHESTERION







VISIT T

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



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.

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.





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



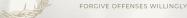


WE NEED NOT DENY THAT MODERN DOUBT, LIKE ANCIENT DOUBT, DOES ASK DEEP QUESTIONS: WE ONLY DENY THAT, AS COMPARED WITH OUR OWN PHILOSOPHY, IT GIVES ANY DEEPER ANSWERS. [...] THE WORLD IS STILL ASKING THE OUESTIONS THAT WERE ASKED BY JOB.



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."





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



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."



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



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.





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









THE WINE THEY DRINK IN PARADISE THEY MAKE IN HAUTE LORRAINE GOD BROUGHT IT BURNING AND SIGNAL ROD

THAT THEY THAT DRINK.

SHALL NEVER THIRST AGAIN.



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 IAILS 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





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





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

C.K. (Gothan).

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





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





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."

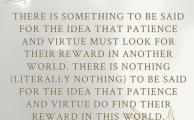
K. (kgot nlow)

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

DOUBT- THE DIVINE REASON
G.K. CHESTERTON

THE PART HE OUGHT NOT TO







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: BU IT IS A FINER THING NOT TO BE TOO EAGER TO FORGIVE OURSELVES.





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.



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





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.





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.

O.H. CHESTERIO



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





LALWAYS 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





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





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





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







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.





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.





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.





SYMPATHY MEANS UNDERSTANDING, AND PATIENCE MEANS SELF-CONTROL.



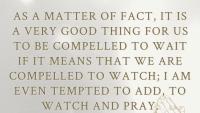


WE ALL ACCEPT THAT ARDUOUS AND DIFFICULT IDEAL WHICH TELLS US THAT WE MUST FORGIVE THE CRIMES OF OUR ENEMIES.



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







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.



[AOUINAS] 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.



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.



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





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



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.





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.





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.





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.



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.

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





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.

C.K. (lestalon?



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