

**English translation of
Christ Temple of Divinity
Sermon
by St Lawrence of Brindisi**

**Translated
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Translator's note.

This translation is based on the introduction, text and footnotes which were published by P. Costanzo Cargnoni O.F.M. Cap. in I Frati Cappuccini: Documenti e testimonianze dell primo secolo, Edizioni Frate Indovino, Perugia, vol III/2, pp.2655 - 2668. The only additions to the notes made by the translator are references to Francis of Assisi: The Early Documents, edited by Regis Armstrong, O.F.M. Cap., J. A. Wayne Hellmann, O.F.M. and William J. Short O.F.M. Conv., New York City Press, New York, London, Manila, for an English version of quotations from the Writings or Biographies of St Francis.

Christ Temple of Divinity

Preface

6229 Just as the ancient world used to honour its princes, kings and emperors by means of thousands of titles and considered them to be worth of trophies, arches, grand buildings, cenotaphs and epitaphs, in the same way theology uses symbols to represent Christ. In order to signify Christ's infinite excellence, it spreads titles throughout Scripture making use of a thousand terms which are evocative, metaphoric, symbolical or honorific. From our perspective we call him light,¹ sun,² star,³ life,⁴ rock,⁵ seed,⁶ flower,⁷ vine,⁸ eagle,⁹ lion,¹⁰ calf,¹¹ goat,¹² ram¹³ corner stone,¹⁴ foundation,¹⁵ truth,¹⁶ life,¹⁷ wisdom¹⁸ virtue¹⁹ beginning,²⁰ master,²¹ head

¹ Cf. 1 Jn. 1, 5; Jn. 8, 12; 12, 46; Ps. 21, 1; Mt. 7, 8 etc.

² Cf. Lk. 1, 78; Mt. 17, 2; Rev. 21, 23; Mt. 2, 4.

³ Cf. Num. 24, 17; 2 Pet. 1, 19; Rev. 22, 16.

⁴ Cf. Jn. 14, 6; Is. 55, 8; Heb. 10, 20.

⁵ Cf. 1 Per. 2, 4; 1 Cor. 10, 4.

⁶ Cf. Mk. 4, 26; Jn. 12, 24; Mt. 14, 4, 24.

⁷ Cf. Song 2, 1 (*Vulg.*); Is 11, 1.

⁸ Cf. Jh. 15, 1 etc.

⁹ Cf. Es. 19, 4; Dt. 32, 11

¹⁰ Cf. Rev. 5, 3

¹¹ Cf. Ez. 1, 7; Rev. 4, 7.

¹² Cf. Song 2, 9.

¹³ Cf. Lv. 16,; Ez 43, 22. 25.

¹⁴ Cf. Is. 28, 16; Eph. 2, 20; 1 Pet. 2, 7.

¹⁵ Cf. 1 Cor. 3, 11 etc.; 2 Tim. 2, 19.

¹⁶ Cf. Jb. 1, 14. 17; 14, 6; Eph. 4, 21.

¹⁷ Cf. Jn. 1, 4; 14, 6; 1 Jn. 5, 12.

¹⁸ Cf. Lk. 2, 40; Col. 2, 1.

¹⁹ Cf. Ps. 45, 2 (*Vulg.*); Lk. 6, 19; Rom. 1, 16. 20; 2 Cor, 12, 9.

²⁰ Cf. Is. 12, 3; Jer. 17, 13; Gal. 4, 18; Rev. 21, 6.

²¹ Cf. Mt. 23, 8; Jn. 13, 13.

and heart.²² When he is considered as God the expressions used include the word of God,²³ the power of God,²⁴ wisdom,²⁵ brightness of eternal light,²⁶ spotless mirror,²⁷ the image of the divine substance,²⁸ brightness of glory,²⁹ image of goodness,³⁰ image of the invisible God,³¹ temple and tabernacle of the divinity,³² treasure of all the divine riches,³³ the light that enlightens every man,³⁴ sun, father of light, fountain of life,³⁵ the one who enlightens us with justification and with grace that gives us life.³⁶ He is a polar star holding the entire world together as the two polar stars do by means of his two natures. He is the road that leads most directly to heaven and the rock that gives us the strength not to fall into the temptations of the ancient serpent. He is the seed that is planted in our heart by faith and which grows into a large tree producing fruit that is worthy of eternal life. He is the flower that produces all the sorrow of real virtue. He is the vine that gives us who are its branches the sap of grace so that we may carry out good works. He is the calf, the goat and the ram who has offered himself to God in sacrifice for our sins; the lion, our real king, who fought against the infernal lion and won; the serpent³⁷ who rose immortal from the rocky tomb, the eagle who flew up to haven beyond the heights;³⁸ who had been created by nature to prepare glory for us. In fact he remained on earth as the foundation of the Church and the head and the heart of his mystical body who gives all its members the experience and support of grace and virtue.

6230 As God he is the radiance of light since he is coeternal with the Father. He is the Father's image³⁹ because he is a distinct person. He is a mirror because he reflects the Father fully. He is the splendour of the Father because he is never apart from him. He is the word of the Father because he is the faithful messenger of the Father's mind. Through whom we understand both the will and the nature of the Father. He is the Father's image and likeness because he the Son who is a replica of his Father.⁴⁰

Do you know why he is the temple of God? *Because in him it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell; in him the fullness of the Godhead dwelt corporately.*⁴¹ This last title applies to him in a very special way and that is why it says in the most holy Gospel today: *Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up again. He said this about the temple of his body.*⁴²

²² Cf. Es. 2, 14; 1 Kgs. 1, 45; Acrs 7, 35; Os. 11, 6; Mk. 12, 29; Jer. 32, 29; ES. 11, 19.

²³ Cf. Rev. 19, 13; Heb. 4, 12; Acts 6, 7; Is. 55, 10 etc.; 1 Pet. 23, 25.

²⁴ Cf. 1 Cor. 1, 24; 2 Pet. 1, 16; Rev. 12, 10.

²⁵ Cf. 1 Cor. 1, 24. 30; Col. 2, 3.

²⁶ Cf. Wis 7, 26a.

²⁷ Cf. Wis, 7, 26b.

²⁸ Cf. Heb. 1, 3.

²⁹ Cf. Ps. 145, 5; Bar. 5, 1; Ez. 10, 4; Is. 60, 19.

³⁰ Cf. 2 Cor. 4, 4; Heb. 1, 3; Tit, 3, 4.

³¹ Cf. Col. 1, 15; Jn. 14, 8-11.

³² Cf. Rev. 21, 3. 22; Mal. 3, 1; Col. 2, 29; Heb. 9, 11.

³³ Cf. Mt. 13, 44; Eph. 1, 18; Col 2, 3.

³⁴ Cf. Jam. 1, 17; Rev. 1, 16; 7, 17; 21, 6. 23; 22, 5.

³⁵ Cf. Jam, 1, 17; Rev. 1, 17; 21, 6. 23; 22, 5.

³⁶ Cf. Tit. 3, 7; 1 Coe I, 4; Jn. 8, 12.

³⁷ Cf. Num. 28, 8-9.

³⁸ Cf. Eph. 4, 9-19.

³⁹ That is *Impronta*. Cf. note 28.

⁴⁰ At this point note how the preface to the sermon is full of biblical quotations and full of symbolic titles for Christ taken from Scripture.

⁴¹ Cor. 1, 19; 2, 9.

⁴² This quote is from the Gospel of the day; Jn. 2, 13-25.

Part one

6231 There is no one who is filled with living faith that does not greatly admire the exquisite diligence of the supreme and immortal God for commanding Moses to build the divine sanctuary. He not only dictated the parts of the building such as the atrium, and *the holy of holies*, but set down the details of each of the main sections indicating their architectural details. *Let them make me a sanctuary and tabernacle in their midst, according to all the likeness of the tabernacle which I shall show you, and all the vessels for the service. Look and make it according to the pattern that was shown to you on the mount.*⁴³

Details were given for the atrium, with the measurement of the columns on each side, including bases, capitols and drapes, in the *holy of holies*, the tabernacle, the tents, giving their number, measurement, colour and fabric. The same was given for the vessels and glasses, the altars of incense, sacrifices and holocausts, tables for bread, candelabras and lamps the veil and every other tiny part. In the *holy of holies* details were given for the propitiatory and the cherubim for their shape, measurement and seize.⁴⁴

O my God, what exquisite diligence you have shown, for what purpose? *To have a dwelling place in their midst!* For me this ought to be my holy palace and august temple. Therefore, I wish that everything that I do be done in conformity with your will.

6232 I still do not comprehend. O my Lord. You are not made of matter. You are most pure spirit. Therefore, why do you want to become part of what is material? You do not live in fabricated time, because you cannot be restricted or confined to any place.⁴⁵ On your own you fill heaven and earth.⁴⁶ Heaven is your throne and earth your footstool.⁴⁷ Neither heaven nor earth can contain you completely.⁴⁸ You are infinite, and by yourself rule a thousand times a thousand worlds. Therefore, why do you want to have a small cabin or hovel on earth? Does the sanctity of man make you happy? *Let them make me a sanctuary and I shall live among them.* We were all conceived and born sinners and, what is worse, we were nourished on sin.⁴⁹ If holiness is what makes you happy, you have angels in heaven who are most holy, without any stain of sin, very pure spirits, beautiful images and living portraits of you. He still says: *Let them make a sanctuary and I shall live among them.*

My dead people, today's holy Gospel clarifies everything: *But he spoke of the temple of his body.*⁵⁰ This is the living, real, sacrosanct and august temple of God: *for in him dwells the fullness of the Godhead corporeally.*⁵¹

Dear listeners, God lives in the entire world. He lives throughout the universe in all creatures. He lives in a special way in sacred places. He lives in our bodies, in our souls, in all the just in this life and in all the blessed in the next life. By his nature

⁴³ Ex. 25, 6-9. 40.

⁴⁴ Ez. 25, 10-40; 26; 30.

⁴⁵ Cf. Acts 17, 24; Mk. 14, 58; 2 Cor. 5, 1.

⁴⁶ Cf. Jer. 23, 24.

⁴⁷ Cf. Is. 66, 1.

⁴⁸ Cf. 2 Chron, 2, 3.

⁴⁹ Cf. Ps. 50, 7 (*Vulg.*)

⁵⁰ Jn. 2, 21.

⁵¹ Col. 2, 9.

he lives in the entire world. *I fill heaven and earth.*⁵² The Wise man says, “All is filled by God.” He is to be found in all creatures in his essence, presence and power. In him we live, move and have our being.⁵³ He shows his presence in a special way in sacred places through the worship of his majesty. He dwells in the just by means of grace and in the blessed by glory.

6233 Our Christ does not lack any of these ways of being present. He had them all from the first moment of his conception. God dwelt in him by nature, presence, essence and power as in every creature, since Christ’s human nature was also created. It is at work there by a special kind of action Just as it is at work in sacred places. Some call miracles all that was done by divine power in Christ, but only some of them were really miracles. He dwells in creation by means of grace. Have you not heard: *He is full of grace and truth?* He lives in glory: *and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father.*⁵⁴

What kind of grace does Christ have? *Of his fullness we have all received.*⁵⁵ His grace is much more extensive than the grace given to all men and angels past, present or future put together have or could have. Similarly, Christ also exceeds them in glory. From the time of his conception he had more grace than any rational creature. The light of the sun does not exceed that of all the stars by as much as the grace of Christ exceeds the grace that has been given to all creatures and the glory of all the blessed put together.

Do you not think that he was God’s most holy temple by means of grace and being filled with infinite light and the splendours of glory? O most holy temple! *He said this about the temple of his body, the temple of his flesh: And the word was made flesh.*⁵⁶

O what a most special and unique way for our Christ to be God’s temple, that would not be appropriate for any other creature! All the other temples⁵⁷ in the world collapse at this point, all the saints that are temples of grace collapse, the angels and archangels collapse, all the thrones, cherubim and seraphim and all the other spirits if there any higher in the empyrean heaven collapse. *The word became flesh.* Christ’s flesh, Christ’s human nature which Christ loved, is all a temple of the most high God by the indwelling of the hypostatic union. *In him dwells the fullness of the Godhead corporeally. Because in him, it has well pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell.*⁵⁸ O temple, O inestimable temple: *He said this about the temple of his body.*

6234 Wake up, dear people; this is the sanctuary concerning which God said: *Let them make me sanctuary and dwelling and I shall dwell among them. He said this about the temple of his body.* The most sacred body of Christ can be truly called a sanctuary, since the sun is not as full of light or free of shade or shadow as Christ’s humanity was always filled with the purest innocence and brightest sanctity. *Who did no sin. Which of you shall convince me of sin?*⁵⁹ *Holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.*⁶⁰ Christ’s holiness always outdid by

⁵² Cf. note 46.

⁵³ Cf. Acts. 17, 28.

⁵⁴ Jn. 1, 14.

⁵⁵ Jn 1, 16.

⁵⁶ Jn. 1, 14a.

⁵⁷ Here *temple*, in the manuscript *tempii*.

⁵⁸ See note 41,

⁵⁹ 1 Pet. 2, 22; Jn. 8, 46.

⁶⁰ Heb. 7, 26.

far the sanctity of the angels, considered as individuals or as a group, since all of them could have sinned with Lucifer. Christ could never have sinned. It would be just as easy for the sun to lose its light as it would be impossible for Christ to sin. It is called the sun because it has more light than all the other heavenly lights, *a greater light to rule the day*.⁶¹ I would call Christ “the greatest sanctuary” beyond all the saints, the supreme sanctuary “of sanctuaries”. *Let them build me a sanctuary and I shall dwell with them. He said this about the temple of his body.*

Dear listeners, whoever gazes at that building is he not looking at a hieroglyphic⁶² image of Christ? Follow me piece by piece since I am anxious to explain this to you. The tabernacle of Moses and Solomon’s temple were divided into two main sections: the atrium and the tabernacle or temple. The second section was divided in two: the outer tabernacle and the *holy of holies*.⁶³

Who is there who cannot see in Christ, as in every human being, that human nature is divided into two parts; soul and body with the soul having two parts: the lower part and the higher part? The body is the atrium, the soul is the tabernacle. The lower part of the soul is the porch to the holy section the higher parts of the soul are the *holy of holies*.⁶⁴

6235 However, be aware of the close connection between the parts. The atrium, as you who have been educated will know, was a place where both those were holy and those who were profane could enter, including the animals who were going to be sacrificed to God. It was from this place that today Christ expelled people. *He entered the temple*, that is the first section of the temple which is called the atrium, *where he saw them that sold oxen and sheep and doves and the changers of money sitting and Christ dismissed them all: and when he had made, as it were, a scourge of little ropes, he drove them all out of the temple, the sheep also and the oxen, and the money of the changes he poured out and the tables he overturned.* Christ did not do this just as something to be written down. He did it as a mystery. This is why the Jews said to him: What sign will you show us seeing that you have done these things? He replied; *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.* The Evangelist explained what Christ said. *He spoke of the temple of his body.*⁶⁵ John says the same but in another way. You are an eagle who knows no other way to fly than flying high and so that we can follow you give us the strength not to fly low. Considered from another point of view he says two things. In the first place he tells us that Christ’s body is the living temple of God. Secondly, he says that the material body was a sign and symbol of Christ’s body. I want to explain this to you.

Therefore, I say that the first section of that temple is the same as with everyone else. This is the first section of the image of Christ’s body. Is not Christ’s body like every other body? He did not only speak to those who were just, to holy people to disciples that had he had chosen for God’s sacred ministry, among whom Peter held the position of High Priest and the other apostles that of the chief priests in the temple and the seventy two disciples the position of sacred ministers of the order of Levites. Christ did not associate exclusively with these people. He also associated with publicans and sinners who were senseless beasts because of their sins. *Man,*

⁶¹ Gen. 1, 16.

⁶² That is sacred pictorial image.

⁶³ Cf. Ex. 25-27; 2 Chron3-4; Heb. 9, 1-7.

⁶⁴ He hinted at this in other homilies. Cf. San Lorenzo da Brindisi, *Opera omnia*, Iv, 141ss; V/2, 33; Vi 463s.

⁶⁵ Cf. note 42.ed

when he was in honour did not understand, he is like senseless beasts and is become like to them.⁶⁶ However senseless beasts were kept in the place only to be offered in sacrifice to God. Christ acted among sinners for no other reason but to lead them to do penance because of their sins. Did he not often say as much to the scribes and Pharisees in response to their calumnies? Do you not know that a suffering heart is a sacrifice to God? *A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit, a contrite and humbled heart, O God, thou will not despise.*⁶⁷

6236 This part of the temple was not shaded from the sun or protected from rain and not covered by any roof. Do you not know about Christ's poverty? How he did not even have a roof over his head? *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.*⁶⁸ To day this first part of the holy temple was profaned by people, the greedy business of the scribes, the Pharisees and the chief priests. O how all this sums up the mystery! In this very temple Christ's body was profaned by his passion and death at Easter! *Destroy this temple, destroy this temple; and in three days I will raise it up. He said this about his body, the temple of his body.* It was profaned by the cross, the nails, the thorns, the pillar, the scourges, the gall, the vinegar, the spittle, the jeers, the abuse, the accusations and death.

Let us now turn to the second section of the temple. This was completely holy. The candelabra was there and the seven lamps. The altar of incense was there and the loaves of propitiation as well as the altar of sacrifice. This is Christ's most sacred and holy soul. Can you see the candelabra and the seven lamps? This is his spirit anointed with the oil of gladness. *Your God has anointed you with the oil of gladness. The spirit of the Lord is upon me, the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and piety and the Lord has filled me with the spirit of fear.*⁶⁹ These are the six lamps. Do you want to see the altar of incense and the altar of sacrifice? Look at Christ praying in the garden: *Father, if it is possible let this chalice pass from me. My soul is sorrowful unto death.*⁷⁰ Is this prayer not like incense? Is this chalice not like sacrifice? His most holy soul is offering his body to die. *Do not as I will but as you will.*⁷¹ Is this not bread from heaven?

6237 Only sacred ministers may enter this place and no one else. When Christ preached in parables, was it not only his disciples were allowed to enter into the mystical understanding of his intellect? *To you it is given to know the mystery of God, to those who are without, all things are done in parables, that seeing they may not see and hearing they may not understand.*⁷² Thus, Christ said to his disciples: *Blessed are the eyes that see the things that you see the ears that hear what you hear. Amen, I say to you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you see and have not seen them, to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them.,*⁷³ because only these sacred ministers were allowed to enter the most holy tabernacle of Christ's soul.

⁶⁶ Cf. Ps. 48, 13 (*Vulg.*)

⁶⁷ Ps. 60, 19 (*Vulg.*)

⁶⁸ Mt. 8, 20; Lk. 9, 58.

⁶⁹ Ps. 44, 8 (*Vulg.*)

⁷⁰ Mt. 26, 38-39; Mk. 14, 34, 36s; Lk. 22, 42.

⁷¹ Mt. 26, 39b; Mk. 14, 36b.

⁷² Mk. 4, 11; Lk. 8, 10.

⁷³ Lk. 10, 3-24.

Do we wish to say something with respect to the *holy of holies*? This was the most prestigious place in the most holy and secret part of the temple. This part contained the ark with the tablets of the law, the flowering rod, and the container of manna. Here stands the propitiatory supported by two cherubim made of finest gold. Above that most sacred throne sat the very venerable Majesty of God. My dear faithful, this is the highest part of Christ's soul which is the main repository of the human nature of the Word and it contains the lower parts of his human nature.

6238 What would you think that the rod, the tablets and the container of manna represented other than communications of divine messages about the union of the natures? By God uniting himself to humanity in Christ he communicated divine power which was symbolised by the rod. His divine wisdom was symbolised by the tablets of the law. His goodness was symbolised by the container of the manna. Thus God sat above this most holy soul, above the very holy place that was held up by the two cherubim that were made out of finest gold, that is Christ's intellect and will: both of which are very sacred: one because of having clear face to face vision of the divine essence, the other because of having perfect enjoyment of the divine goodness. Because these attributes were superimposed on his most holy soul from the time of his conception Christ was always most blessed.

The sacred ministers were never allowed to enter the *holy of holies*, the only one allowed to enter once a year was the high priest. Do you not know that by divine revelation only Peter proclaimed Christ's divinity? *You are Christ the Son of the living God.* ⁷⁴ O Peter, blessed three or four times, you are the only one allowed to enter God's most sacred resting place, in the supreme most blessed abode of Christ and behold such glory: *Blessed are you, Simon Bar Jona: because flesh and blood have not revealed it to you, but my Father who is in heaven,* ⁷⁵

My dear people, when Christ died it became possible for all to enter the *holy of holies*, because then the sacred temple was destroyed. *Destroy this temple. And the veil of the temple was rent in two from the top even to the bottom.* ⁷⁶ Did you not know this? Then all the secrets of that place were uncovered, and Christ's divinity was made known. *Truly his man was the Son of God;* said the Centurion. ⁷⁷

There all the symbols of the divine mysteries in the temple have been explained. *Let them make me a sanctuary and dwelling among them. He was speaking about the temple of his body.*

6239 O educated people did you not know that Solomon's temple was built on Mount Moriah. Christ's temple was built on another Mount, the one called Mary? *The one that will be born from you will be called the holy Son of God.* ⁷⁸ Dear listeners, this is the temple of which the great father Jacob spoke after he awoke from a dream in which he saw an exalted vision: *Indeed, the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And trembling he said: How terrible is this place? This is no other than the house of God and the gate of heaven.* ⁷⁹

Indeed, what do you think the staircase was if not Christ? O what a divine staircase! The bottom step is the flesh; the lower landing is the lower part of the soul

⁷⁴ Mt. 16, 16.

⁷⁵ Mt. 16, 17.

⁷⁶ Mt. 27, 51.

⁷⁷ Mt. 27, 34; Mk. 15, 39; Lk. 23, 47.

⁷⁸ Lk. 1, 35. Mary's name is also contained in another holily. Cf. *Opera omnia*, V?1 339.

⁷⁹ Gen. 28, 16-17.

and the higher landing is its upper part. *The Lord is standing on the staircase,*⁸⁰ because united to Christ's humanity and so he says; *Indeed, the Lord is in this place.*

Is God not in every place? Yes, but here *he dwells in everything bodily with all his divinity.* He is not to be found in this way anywhere else. Therefore, *indeed God is in this place, this is nothing but the house of God.* O most holy house! *The house of God, in which it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell.*⁸¹

6240 Dear listeners, Christ is not only the temple of God in this life. He is the only temple in the heavenly Jerusalem. Do you not remember that John said that there would be no temple in the heavenly city; *for the Lord God is the temple thereof, and the Lamb.*⁸² Thus Job said that Christ is not only God's house, but the door to heaven: *and the gate of heaven. He said this of the temple of his body.* O most sacred temple that must be adored even by the angels. *Let all the angels of God adore him! That in the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven, on earth and under the earth!*⁸³ Job said: *How terrible is this place!* Why terrible? This is because it is the house of God, because *it is the temple of God. The one who violates the temple of God, him God shall destroy.*⁸⁴

Did you not see today how zealous Christ was about his Father's temple? Did you not see him burn with anger and rise with contempt against those who had made God's temple a place of business and a market place? *And when he had made, as it were, a scourge of little cords, he drove them all out of the temple, the sheep also and the oxen and the money of the changes he poured out, and the tables he overthrew. He said: take thee things hence and make not the house of my Father a house of traffic.*⁸⁵

6241 But, O Christ, O Christ, if you were so angry, so disgusted, so furious towards those who profaned your symbolical temple, what will you do to those who profane and violate your most sacred temple, your body, your very self? O Christians, O Christians, the temple of Christ is profaned in the world! St Paul says that our bodies and temples of Christ, that they are temples of God.⁸⁶ When these temples are profaned by lust, fornication, adultery and many other abominable sins, think about what this means. I do not want to speak about this kind of temple. Today all Christians profane sacred places, churches where divine praise is offered, cult carried out and honour paid to God. O how many such places could I mention! O how many! Today the temples are no longer temples but worse than city squares. Why do I call them city squares? I must tell it as it is. Today they have become places of vanity, lasciviousness and pursuits of the flesh. I wish to God that I were telling a lie and not the truth!

Do you not think that many come to the church out of vanity, out of lust to look at beautiful women to make love? O God, O God! O Christ. O Christ! What has become of the Christian religion? What do you think of women like this? For them what is the difference between going to church and going to a dance? Do they come to church to adore God or honour Christ? It is not for God, or Christ, but the devil, the devil! They honour the Antichrist, the Antichrist with their vanity and lust!

⁸⁰ Cf. Gen. 28, 13.

⁸¹ Cf. note 58.

⁸² Rev. 21, 22.

⁸³ Cf. Heb. 1, 6; Ps. 96, 7 (*Vulg.*); Phil. 2, 10.

⁸⁴ ! Cor. 3, 16-17.

⁸⁵ Jn. 2, 15-16.

⁸⁶ 1 Cor. 6, 15. 19.

6242 Do you not think that this is the situation? Ladies, how many mortal sins are committed in churches because of your lustful and shameful conduct? You dress lasciviously to please men and men like to look at you lasciviously. If you take them close to the fire do you not want the flame of lust to ignite them? ⁸⁷

However, I do not want to say more than I should concerning the violation of churches and holy places by dwelling on the most profane abuses. I want to approach the temple of the real Body of Christ. *For he was speaking about the temple of his body.* Christ's body is in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar and in heaven. Let us see if the sacrosanct temple is profaned in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

In any case they do not commit many sins since ninety nine percent of them receive communion only once or twice a year. When they do receive it how do you think that they receive it? Do you think that they do so in the proper manner? Very badly indeed! How many receive communion while they have a concubine at home, when they have apostatised by adultery, or have a prostitute at their beck and call? How many receive communion with hatred in their heart, or with blood on their hands or with a sackful of money that has been acquired illegally? What about your gentle and dear ladies? Can you not see that when they go to receive communion they dress up beautifully? Make yourselves look beautiful, adorn yourselves with trinkets, with a thousand kinds of vanities that are provocative and disgusting. Is this receiving communion? It is more like not receiving communion or communicating with Judas who after he received communion had the devil enter him and went off to betray Christ. O poor Christ! How do your Christians for whom you shed blood, for whom you died on the cross, treat you! How many injuries do your Christians inflict on you! Lord, how many false oaths do they take on your Gospel, in your name, in the name of the faith and of your person! How many curses, Lord, how many curses do they utter against you, against your saints, your Mother, your Majesty and your Father!

6243 Christians, can you not see that this is profaning the real temple of Christ and worse than what the judges did at the crucifixion?

Now I have something else to tell you about the infinite injuries of Christ. Christians live so carelessly today that we find that there are worse sins committed by them than by the Turks of the Jews. Where do you find as many murders among the Turks as you find among Christians? Will you find as much filthy lust among the Jews as you find among Christians? If there is usury among the Jews, it is worse among Christians. If there is the filth of the flesh among Turks, it is much worse among Christians. Christians are guilty of pride through pomp and vanity. O Christ! O Christ!

What do the infidels say when they discover such evil among Christians? Indeed, what could they say but that Christ was the worst, most shameful and most wicked man to have ever appeared under the sun? O Christians, O Christians! Is it not enough that Christ died on the cross for our sins and yet we still cause that his most holy and glorious name be regarded with shame, abuse and blasphemy? We took his life; do we also want to take away his honour? We caused him to die between two wicked men and do we want him to be regarded as wicked? Grant grace! Grant grace! *Take these things hence, take these things hence,* ⁸⁸ do not turn, do not turn, the most

⁸⁷ This is a reminder of *Const.* 1536, n. 137, 5-7 (n. 400).

⁸⁸ Jn. 2, 16.

holy temple of the living and true God into a den of thieves! O Christians, cleanse, cleanse Christ's temple, God's temple!

We are his temple, we are his members, we are his body! Let us cleanse our body of wicked deeds, of so much that is sinful, and God's temple will be sanctified. Otherwise: *If any man violates the temple of God, him shall God destroy.*⁸⁹ On the other hand, anyone who makes God's temple holy shall be glorified in the life to come.

⁸⁹ 1 Cor. 3. 17.