

His Heart rejoices at the thought that the frightful sufferings of His crowning are going to obtain the grace of expiation for all our sins and, above all, for those of which the human head is the organ, the cause, or the occasion. He knows that the head, by the beauty of its hair, the majesty of its forehead, the lustre of its eyes, the charm of its lips, may become for many a cause of spiritual ruin and eternal damnation. Behold why, wishing to expiate all men's profanation of God's best gifts, He joyfully allowed Himself to be crowned with thorns. With joy He allowed His forehead to be humbled, in order to expiate the pride of those that refuse to bow their head before divine authority, for those that blush to genuflect or prostrate before His Majesty veiled in the Sacrament. With joy, He allowed to be veiled with blood His eyes of ravishing beauty, in order to expiate all looks of curiosity, guilt, jealousy, and hatred. With joy, He allowed His pure lips to be sullied by filthy spittle, in order to expiate all detractions and calumnies, impure conversations, useless words, all that world of iniquity which springs from human lips. With joy, He allowed His face to be disfigured in every divine feature, in His hair, which so admirably set off the charms of His countenance. He desired to expiate the sins which men commit by ornamenting their head with finery, and thereby turning hearts from Him who alone has a right to possess them.

In one word, it was to obtain for us the crown of glory that Jesus allowed Himself with so much happiness to be crowned with thorns. The saints in heaven are wearing crowns only because Jesus bore His bloody diadem. Mary herself, whose forehead is graced by the most beautiful crown after that of Jesus—does she not owe it to the sufferings and humiliations of the prætorium? The angels—did they not behold their marvelously embellished at this blessed moment of Jesus' Passion?

How good Thou wast, O Heavenly Father, to have chosen the head of Thy most dear Son on which to place the sign of divine malediction, thus changing it into a sign of benediction? Mayst Thou be forever blessed and thanked?