

chains by which sin enthralls us, severs earth's ties, releases from the weight of the body, and sets the soul free to fly, as though on dove wings, to her everlasting home. More than all, it conforms us to Jesus suffering on earth, glorious in heaven, marking us with the seal of the predestinate. *A true saying, if we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him.*

Of all practices of penance, fasting is the most salutary. It is that which the Saviour sanctified by His example, which His apostles imitated and handed down to the Church, which they consecrated in the Lent. It attacks the enemy in his stronghold, cutting off his supplies and crippling his power. Whilst it weakens the body it strengthens the mind, and disposes it for the meditation of heavenly truth. The very body partakes of the benefit in the repose of its organs, in the extinction of its redundant humors, and not unfrequently in general healthiness and prolongation of life. Death is wont to knock earlier and oftener at the door of the mansion than at the gate of the monastery. The physician is summoned more frequently to the couch of the intemperate and luxurious than to the pallet of the monk or contemplative.

What we lack is not physical strength but moral courage. Let us fix our gaze during Lent on the brazen serpent, Him who suffered and died for us, and our languor, our cowardice shall be healed. "How shameful to see a pampered member under a thorn-crowned Head!"