

even in thought, is to have passed from the state of favour with God to the state of separation from Him, is to have ceased being the friend, the beloved child of the Almighty, and to have become the slave of Satan and the heir to perdition. Is this the state of even one soul in this diocese? Is it the condition of a large number? The conscience of each man will tell him how he stands, but, be the number large or small, to such we say: let there be no procrastination of intention, no postponement of action, make your peace with God. Delay may bring you an eternity of woe, whilst upon immediate repentance may depend your salvation. "Be converted, and do penance for all your iniquities: and iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions by which you have transgressed, and make to yourselves a new heart, and a new spirit: And why will you die, O house of Israel."—*Ezekiel XVIII.*, 30, 31.

During the hallowed days of Lent, dear Brethren, the Church expects that you will assist more frequently at Mass, that you will recite the rosary every day, and that, as far as in you lies, you will fast and abstain and perform other works of piety, but, do you realize, if you continue to live in a state of enmity with God, whatever good works you perform will profit you nothing? The most you can hope for is that they will obtain for you true sorrow and repentance, and, no doubt they will, but, apart from this, they have no other supernatural value. Good works done in mortal sin are dead works, because the soul itself is dead. Delay your return to the Lord, and, for want of such dispositions as are necessary to stamp a supernatural value on your actions, these will be considered as dross, nothing worth, in the eternal account of God. "If the just man turn himself away from his justice and do iniquity...all his justice which he had done shall not be remembered."—*Ezekiel XVIII.*, 24. On the other hand, if you recover now the divine favour, every act, performed with a view of pleasing the Almighty, will infallibly be rewarded by an increase of grace here, and an extra degree of glory hereafter.