

After their subjection to Roman sway, this privilege was still allowed them, with this condition, however, that it would be the Roman Governor himself who would present to them two or three criminals capable of receiving pardon. The Jews had the choice of any one of the prisoners they preferred, and Pilate made use of this circumstance. He tried once more to deliver Jesus, if not as innocent, at least as pardoned. The better to succeed, he presented to them along with Jesus, Barabbas, a brigand notorious for his crimes. He said to them: "*Which of the two will you have?*"

Pilate, how dost thou dare make a comparison between Jesus and Barabbas, between the Creator and the creature, between God and man, Holiness and sin?

Who is Jesus-Christ? Is He not the only Son of God, the eternal Word of the Father, full of grace and truth, the splendor of His glory, the image of His substance, He who sustains all things by the power of His word? He is the King of glory, the God of majesty, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Holy of holies!

And who is Barabbas? He is a creature, a creature fallen by his crimes into the lowest stratum of human society, a robber, a revolutionist, a murderer!

Which do you prefer?

To Thee, O Jesus, all honor and glory from every creature, angelic and human, at this very moment when Thou art subjected to that outrageous comparison! And now when shut up in our tabernacle, Thou dost appear so small in the eyes of the wise ones of the world, I acknowledge Thee, I proclaim Thee infinitely superior to every man, were he prince or king, to every angel, were he cherub or seraph, to every being created or creatable. Thou art the King of men and angels. Could I unite all that is beautiful, rich, or great in heaven or on earth, all would be nothing, absolutely nothing, in comparison with the least particle of the consecrated Host. There, in the Sacrament as at the side of Barabbas, Thou dost rule in heaven. In admirable order, Thou dost marshal the stellar host and call them by their name. Thou truly art the Master of the world. I humbly prostrate before Thee, offering from myself and all creatures profound adoration.

### III. — Reparation.

*Which of the two will you that I deliver unto you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Christ?*" What iniquity in this comparison! The fact alone of presenting Jesus to know what he should do with Him, is a crying injustice. Having just now declared Him innocent, Pilate is bound to deliver Him. Still more, putting Him on the same footing as the murderer Barabbas, he