

prived of its peerless beauty and likeness to God, must not such a sight, we say, be calculated to bring tears, if that were possible, from the God that made it and the Christ that redeemed it, and to dim the very joys of heaven with the shadow of a great sorrow. Of a soul in such a state we may well say with the prophet "to what shall I compare thee; or to what shall I liken thee; to what shall I equal thee; for great as the sea is thy destruction; who shall heal thee?" (Lamen ii c. 13 v.) Now as Christ raised Lazarus from the dead and restored him to his home, so the sacrament of penance raises the dead soul to life and restores the sinner as a living member to the holy Church of God. This sacrament is called a sacrament of the dead because it raises souls dead in sin to the life of justice and virtue. The soul in its spiritual resurrection effected by Penance rises into a new life, puts off the foulness and repulsiveness of death and the breadth and stench of the grave, and resumes its likeness to God and its former beauty and comeliness. It is no longer a dead thing; it is no longer full of the poison of sin and of the stench of the grave; but it is now a living and immortal being, a thing of beauty and a joy forever, a child of God, an heir of heaven, and a sister to the holy angels. It has ceased to be an object of loathing and of hatred to God, to grieve the loving heart of Christ and to fill the angels with sorrow, and it has become a new creature created according to God in justice and the holiness of truth; it is an object of love to the Sacred Heart of our Lord, and there is joy in heaven because a sinner has done penance and received the grace of absolution. This then is one of the great effects of the sacrament of Penance. It raises the soul dead in sin to a life of justice and grace, it effects a new creation, a new transformation; it puts off from the repentant sinner "the old man who is corrupted according to the desire of error, and it clothes him with the new man who, according to God, is created in justice and in holiness of truth." (Ephes. iv c. 24 v.) As the first Adam, being the head of the human race, involved it in his fall and