

Julian of Nortwich SHOWINGS

TRANSLATED FROM THE CRITICAL TEXT
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
EDMUND COLLEDGE, O.S.A.

AND
JAMES WALSH, S.J.

PREFACE BY
JEAN LECLERCQ, O.S.B.



PAULIST PRESS

The First Chapter

Here begins the first chapter.

This is a revelation of love which Jesus Christ, our endless bliss, made in sixteen showings, of which the first is about his precious crowning of thorns; and in this was contained and specified the blessed Trinity, with the Incarnation and the union between God and man's soul, with many fair revelations and teachings of endless wisdom and love, in which all the revelations which follow are founded and connected.

The second revelation is about the discoloration of his fair face, to signify his precious Passion.

The third revelation is that our Lord God almighty, all wisdom and all love, just as truly as he has made everything which is, so truly he does and performs all things which are done.

The fourth revelation is of the scourging of his tender body, with copious shedding of his precious blood.

The fifth revelation is that the fiend is overcome by the precious Passion of Christ.

The sixth revelation is of the honourable thanks with

which our Lord God rewards all his blessed servants in heaven.

The seventh revelation is of the frequent experiences of well-being and of woe. To experience well-being is to be touched and illumined by grace, with true certainty of endless joy; the experience of woe comes as a temptation, through the heaviness and weariness of our mortal life, with spiritual understanding that we are preserved in love by the goodness of God just as truly in woe as in well-being.

The eighth revelation is of Christ's last sufferings and of his cruel death.

The ninth revelation is of the delight which the blessed Trinity has in the cruel Passion of Christ, once his sorrowful death was accomplished, and that he wishes that joy and delight to be our solace and happiness, as it is his, until we come to glory in heaven.

The tenth revelation tells how our Lord Jesus displays his heart split in two for love.

The eleventh revelation is an exalted spiritual showing concerning his dear mother.

The twelfth revelation is that our Lord is all sovereign life.

The thirteenth revelation is that our Lord God wishes us to have great regard for all the deeds which he has performed in the most noble work of creating all things, and it treats of the excellence of man's creation, which is superior to all God's works; and it is about the precious amends which he has made for man's sin, turning all our blame into everlasting honour. Here he says: Behold and see, for by the same power, wisdom and goodness that I have done all this, by the same power, wisdom and goodness I shall make all things well which are not well, and you will see it. And in this it is his wish that we should preserve ourselves in the faith and truth of Holy Church, not wishing to know his mysteries except as that is fitting for us in this life.

The fourteenth revelation is that our Lord God is the foundation of our beseeching. In this two fair qualities were seen. One is proper prayer; the other is true trust, and he wishes them both to be equally generous. And so our prayer is pleasing to him, and he in his goodness fulfils it.

The fifteenth revelation is that suddenly we shall be taken from all our pain and from all our woe, and in his goodness we shall come up above, where we shall have our Lord Jesus for our reward, to be fulfilled with joy and bliss in heaven.

The sixteenth revelation is that the blessed Trinity our Creator dwells eternally in our soul in Christ Jesus our saviour, honourably ruling and commanding all things, powerfully and wisely saving and preserving us out of love; and that we shall not be overcome by our enemy.

The Second Chapter

This revelation was made to a simple, unlettered¹ creature, living in this mortal flesh, the year of our Lord one thousand, three hundred and seventy-three, on the thirteenth day of May; and before this the creature had desired three graces by the gift of God. The first was recollection of the Passion. The second was bodily sickness. The third was to have, of God's gift, three wounds. As to the first, it seemed to me that I had some feeling for the Passion of Christ, but still I desired to have more by the grace of God. I thought that I wished that I had been at that time with Magdalen and with the others who were Christ's lovers, so that I might have seen with my own eyes the Passion which our Lord suffered for me, so that I might have suffered with him as

1. Whatever 'unlettered' may mean here, it cannot be 'illiterate'. See *Showings*, I, 43-52, for the editors' reasons for interpreting it as 'lacking in literary skills'.

others did who loved him. Therefore I desired a bodily sight, in which I might have more knowledge of our saviour's bodily pains, and of the compassion of our Lady and of all his true lovers who were living at that time and saw his pains, for I would have been one of them and have suffered with them. I never desired any other sight of God or revelation, until my soul would be separated from the body, for I believed that I should be saved by the mercy of God. This was my intention, because I wished afterwards, because of that revelation, to have truer recollection of Christ's Passion. As to the second grace, there came into my mind with contrition—a free gift which I did not seek—a desire of my will to have by God's gift a bodily sickness. I wished that sickness to be so severe that it might seem mortal, so that I might in it receive all the rites which Holy Church has to give me, whilst I myself should think that I was dying, and everyone who saw me would think the same; for I wanted no comfort from any human, earthly life in that sickness. I wanted to have every kind of pain, bodily and spiritual, which I should have if I had died, every fear and temptation from devils, and every other kind of pain except the departure of the spirit. I intended this because I wanted to be purged by God's mercy, and afterwards live more to his glory because of that sickness; because I hoped that this would be to my reward when I should die, because I desired soon to be with my God and my Creator.

These two desires about the Passion and the sickness which I desired from him were with a condition, for it seemed to me that this was not the ordinary practice of prayer; therefore I said: Lord, you know what I want, if it be your will that I have it, and if it be not your will, good Lord, do not be displeased, for I want nothing which you do not want. When I was young I desired to have this sickness when I would be thirty years old.

As to the third, by the grace of God and the teaching of

Holy Church I conceived a great desire to receive three wounds in my life, that is, the wound of true contrition, the wound of loving compassion and the wound of longing with my will for God. Just as I asked for the other two conditionally, so I asked urgently for this third without any condition. The two desires which I mentioned first passed from my mind, and the third remained there continually.

The Third Chapter

And when I was thirty and a half years old, God sent me a bodily sickness in which I lay for three days and three nights, and on the third night I received all the rites of Holy Church, and did not expect to live until day. And after this I lay for two days and two nights, and on the third night I often thought that I was on the point of death, and those who were with me often thought so. And yet in this I felt a great reluctance to die, not that there was anything on earth which it pleased me to live for, or any pain of which I was afraid, for I trusted in the mercy of God. But it was because I wanted to live to love God better and longer, so that I might through the grace of that living have more knowledge and love of God in the bliss of heaven. Because it seemed to me that all the time that I had lived here was very little and short in comparison with the bliss which is everlasting, I thought: Good Lord, can my living no longer be to your glory? And I understood by my reason and the sensation of my pains that I should die; and with all the will of my heart I assented to be wholly as was God's will.

So I lasted until day, and by then my body was dead from the middle downwards, as it felt to me. Then I was helped to sit upright and supported, so that my heart might be more free to be at God's will, and so that I could think of him whilst my life would last. My curate was sent for to be

present at my end; and before he came my eyes were fixed upwards, and I could not speak. He set the cross before my face, and said: I have brought the image of your saviour; look at it and take comfort from it. It seemed to me that I was well, for my eyes were set upwards towards heaven, where I trusted that I by God's mercy was going; but nevertheless I agreed to fix my eyes on the face of the crucifix if I could, and so I did, for it seemed to me that I would hold out longer with my eyes set in front of me rather than upwards. After this my sight began to fail. It grew as dark around me in the room as if it had been night, except that there was ordinary light trained upon the image of the cross, I did not know how. Everything around the cross was ugly and terrifying to me, as if it were occupied by a great crowd of devils.

After this the upper part of my body began to die, until I could scarcely feel anything. My greatest pain was my shortness of breath and the ebbing of my life. Then truly I believed that I was at the point of death. And suddenly at that moment all my pain was taken from me, and I was as sound, particularly in the upper part of my body, as ever I was before. I was astonished by this sudden change, for it seemed to me that it was by God's secret doing and not natural; and even so, in this ease which I felt, I had no more confidence that I should live, nor was the ease I felt complete for me, for I thought that I would rather have been delivered of this world, because that was what my heart longed for.

Then suddenly it came into my mind that I ought to wish for the second wound as a gift and a grace from our Lord, that my body might be filled full of recollection and feeling of his blessed Passion, as I had prayed before, for I wished that his pains might be my pains, with compassion which would lead to longing for God. So it seemed to me that I might with his grace have the wounds which I had

before desired; but in this I never wanted any bodily vision or any kind of revelation from God, but the compassion which I thought a loving soul could have for our Lord Jesus, who for love was willing to become a mortal man. I desired to suffer with him, living in my mortal body, as God would give me grace.

The Fourth Chapter

And at this, suddenly I saw the red blood running down from under the crown, hot and flowing freely and copiously, a living stream, just as it was at the time when the crown of thorns was pressed on his blessed head. I perceived, truly and powerfully, that it was he who just so, both God and man, himself suffered for me, who showed it to me without any intermediary.

And in the same revelation², suddenly the Trinity filled my heart full of the greatest joy, and I understood that it will be so in heaven without end to all who will come there. For the Trinity is God, God is the Trinity. The Trinity is our maker, the Trinity is our protector, the Trinity is our everlasting lover, the Trinity is our endless joy and our bliss, by our Lord Jesus Christ and in our Lord Jesus Christ. And this was revealed in the first vision and in them all, for where Jesus appears the blessed Trinity is understood, as I see it³. And I said: Blessed be the Lord! This I said with a reverent intention and in a loud voice, and I was greatly astonished by this wonder and marvel, that he who is so to be revered and feared would be so familiar⁴ with a sinful creature living in this wretched flesh.

2. Here the first notable addition in the long text begins. See p. 129.

3. This ends the first addition.

4. Ms: 'homely'; see p. 129.

I accepted it that at that time our Lord Jesus wanted, out of his courteous love, to show me comfort before my temptations began; for it seemed to me that I might well be tempted by devils, by God's permission and with his protection, before I would die. With this sight of his blessed Passion, with the divinity which I saw in my understanding, I knew well that this was strength enough for me, yes, and for all living creatures who were to be saved, against all the devils of hell and against all their spiritual enemies.

In this he brought⁵ our Lady St. Mary to my understanding. I saw her spiritually in her bodily likeness, a simple, humble maiden, young in years, grown a little taller than a child, of the stature which she had when she conceived. Also God showed me part of the wisdom and the truth of her soul, and in this I understood the reverent contemplation with which she beheld her God, who is her Creator, marvelling with great reverence that he was willing to be born of her who was a simple creature created by him⁶. And this wisdom and truth, this knowledge of her Creator's greatness and of her own created littleness, made her say very meekly to Gabriel: Behold me here, God's handmaiden. In this sight I understood truly that she is greater, more worthy and more fulfilled, than everything else which God has created, and which is inferior to her. Above her is no created thing, except the blessed humanity of Christ, as I saw.

5. The rest of this chapter is a rearrangement of matter from the short text. See p. 131.

6. This corrects a scribal error found in both texts. See *Showings*, II, 297 and p. 131.

somewhat surprising, for it seemed to me that this vision was revealed for those who would go on living.

Everything that I say¹⁹ about me I mean to apply to all my fellow Christians, for I am taught that this is what our Lord intends in this spiritual revelation. And therefore I pray you all for God's sake, and I counsel you for your own profit, that you disregard the wretch to whom it was shown, and that mightily, wisely and meekly you contemplate upon God, who out of his courteous love and his endless goodness was willing to show it generally, to the comfort of us all. For it is God's will that you accept it with great joy and delight, as²⁰ Jesus has²¹ shown it to you.

The Ninth Chapter

I am not good because of the revelations, but only if I love God better; and inasmuch as you love God better, it is more to you than to me. I do not say this to those who are wise, because they know it well. But I say it to you who are simple, to give you comfort and strength; for we are all one in love, for truly it was not revealed to me that²² God loves me better than the humblest soul who is in a state of grace. For I am sure that there are many who never had revelations or visions, but only the common teaching of Holy Church, who love God better than I. If I pay special attention to myself, I am nothing at all; but in general I am, I hope, in the unity of love with all my fellow Christians. For it is in this unity that the life of all men consists who will be saved. For God is everything that is good, as I see; and God has

19. This reverts to chapter vi; see p. 133.

20. S2 agrees with the short text: 'as if'.

21. SS agree with the short text: 'had'.

22. C: 'for that'; S2: 'because that', which agree with the short text, p. 134.

made everything that is made, and God loves everything that he has made. And he who has general love for all his fellow Christians in God has love towards everything that is. For in mankind which will be saved is comprehended all, that is to say all that is made and the maker of all. For God is in man and in God is all²³. And he who loves thus loves all. And I hope by the grace of God that he who may see it so will be taught the truth and greatly comforted, if he has need of comfort.

I speak of those²⁴ who will be saved, for at this time God showed me no one else. But in everything I believe as Holy Church preaches and teaches²⁵. For the faith of Holy Church, which I had before I had understanding²⁶, and which, as I hope by the grace of God, I intend to preserve whole and to practise, was always in my sight, and I wished and intended never to accept anything which might be contrary to it. And to this end and with this intention I contemplated the revelation with all diligence, for throughout this blessed revelation I contemplated it as God intended.

All this was shown in three parts²⁷, that is to say, by bodily vision and by words formed in my understanding and by spiritual vision. But I may not and cannot show the spiritual visions as plainly and fully as I should wish. But I trust in our Lord God almighty that he will, out of his goodness and for love of you, make you accept it more spiritually and more sweetly than I can or may tell it.

23. SS: 'and God is in all'. Both readings differ from the short text's 'and so in man is all', p. 134.

24. There is the significant omission, here, of the passage in chapter vi of the short text beginning: 'But God forbid that you should say. . .', p. 135.

25. Most of the rest of this paragraph is original to the long text, and its conclusion varies somewhat from the end of the short text's chapter vi.

26. That is, of the revelations; see *Showings*, II, 333.

27. That is, 'different modes'.

The Fifth Revelation

The Thirteenth Chapter

And after this⁵⁷, before God revealed any words, he allowed me to contemplate him for a fitting length of time, and all that I had seen, and all the significance that was contained in it, as well as my soul's simplicity could accept it. And then he, without voice and without opening of lips, formed in my soul this saying: With this the fiend is overcome. Our Lord said this to me with reference to his blessed Passion, as he had shown it before. In this he showed a part of the fiend's malice, and all of his impotence, because he showed that his Passion is the overcoming of the fiend. God showed me that the fiend has now the same malice as he had before the Incarnation, and he works as hard, and he sees as constantly as he did before that all souls who will be saved escape him to God's glory by the power of our Lord's precious Passion. And that is the devil's sorrow, and he is put to terrible shame, for everything which God permits him to do turns to joy for us and to pain and shame for him. And he has as much sorrow when God permits him to work as when he is not working. And that is because he can never do as much evil as he would wish, for his power is all locked in God's hands. But in God⁵⁸ there can be no anger, as I see it, and it is with power and justice, to the profit of all who will be saved, that he opposes the damned, who in malice and malignity work to frustrate and oppose God's will.

Also I saw our Lord scorn his malice and despise him as nothing, and he wants us to do so. Because of this sight I laughed greatly, and that made those around me to laugh as

57. Correspondence with the short text resumes; see p. 138.

58. This sentence is not in the short text.

well; and their laughter was pleasing to me. I thought that I wished that all my fellow Christians had seen what I saw. Then they would all have laughed with me; but I did not see Christ laughing, but I know well that it was the vision he showed me which made me laugh, for I understood that we may laugh, to comfort ourselves and rejoice in God, because the devil is overcome. And when I saw⁵⁹ our Lord scorn his malice, that was through the fixing of my understanding on him⁶⁰, that is, that this was an interior revelation of his truth, in which his demeanour did not change. For as I see it, this is an attribute of God which must be honoured, and which lasts forever.

And after this I became serious again, and said: I see three things: sport and scorn and seriousness. I see sport, that the devil is overcome; and I see scorn, that God scorns him and he will be scorned; and I see seriousness, that he is overcome by the blessed Passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was accomplished in great earnest and with heavy labour. And when I said⁶¹ that he is scorned, I meant that God scorns him, that is, because he sees him now as he will forever. For in this God revealed that the devil is damned. And I meant this when I said that he ought to be scorned; for I saw that on Judgment Day he will be generally scorned by all who will be saved, of whose salvation he has had great envy. For then he will see that all the woe and tribulation which he has caused them will be changed into the increase of their eternal joy. And all the pain and the sorrow that he wanted to bring them into will go forever with him to hell.

59. The rest of this paragraph is not in the short text.

60. Or, as C has: 'this was a vision, to my understanding, of him'.

61. The rest of this chapter is not in the short text.

her, and in the delight that he has in her and she in him¹¹⁶.

And for greater understanding¹¹⁷ he showed this example, as if, when a man loves some creature particularly, more than all other creatures, he will make all other creatures to love and delight in that creature whom he loves so much. And in these words which Jesus said: Do you wish to see her? it seemed to me that these were the most delectable words which he could give me in this spiritual vision of her which he gave me. For our Lord showed me no particular person except our Lady St. Mary, and he showed her on three occasions. The first was as she conceived, the second was as she had been under the Cross, and the third was as she is now, in delight, honour and joy.

The Twelfth Revelation

The Twenty-Sixth Chapter

And after this our Lord showed himself to me, and he appeared to me more glorified than I had seen him before, in which I was taught¹¹⁸ that our soul will never have rest till it comes into him, acknowledging that he is full of joy, familiar and courteous and blissful and true life. Again and again our Lord said: I am he, I am he, I am he who is highest. I am he whom you love. I am he in whom you delight. I am he whom you serve. I am he for whom you long. I am he whom you desire. I am he whom you intend. I am he who is all. I am he whom Holy Church preaches and teaches to you. I am he who showed himself before to you. The

116. 'And in the delight. . . she in him': supplied from SS, which agree with the short text; P, C omit.

117. This sentence is not in the short text.

118. In what follows, this sentence is significantly different from the short text; see p. 147.

number¹¹⁹ of the words surpasses my intelligence and my understanding and all my powers, for they were the most exalted, as I see it, for in them is comprehended I cannot tell what; but the joy which I saw when they were revealed surpasses all that the heart can think or the soul may desire. And therefore these words are not explained here¹²⁰, but let every man accept them as our Lord intended them, according to the grace God gives him in understanding and love.

The Thirteenth Revelation

The Twenty-Seventh Chapter

And after this¹²¹ our Lord brought to my mind the longing that I had for him before, and I saw that nothing hindered me but sin, and I saw that this is true of us all in general, and it seemed to me that if there had been no sin, we should all have been pure and as like our Lord as he created us. And so in my folly before this time I often wondered why, through the great prescient¹²² wisdom of God, the beginning of sin was not prevented. For then it seemed to me that all would have been well.

The impulse to think this was greatly to be shunned; and nevertheless I mourned and sorrowed on this account, unreasonably, lacking discretion¹²³. But Jesus, who in this vision informed me about everything needful to me,

119. The rest of this chapter differs from the short text.

120. On the significance of this for the first and second versions of the long text, see Introduction.

121. Correspondence with the short text resumes; see p. 147.

122. P, C have 'aforesaid'; but SS agree with the short text.

123. The long text omits the short text's 'filled with pride'.

answered with these words¹²⁴ and said: Sin is necessary¹²⁵, but all will be well, and all will be well, and every kind of thing will be well. In this naked word 'sin', our Lord brought generally to my mind all which is not good, and the shameful contempt and the direst tribulation which he endured for us in this life, and his death and all his pains, and the passions, spiritual and bodily, of all his creatures. For we are all in part troubled¹²⁶, and we shall be troubled¹²⁷, following our master Jesus until we are fully purged of our mortal flesh and all our inward affections which are not very good.

And with the beholding of this, with all the pains that ever were or ever will be, I understood Christ's Passion for the greatest and surpassing pain. And yet this was shown to me in an instant, and it quickly turned into consolation. For our good Lord would not have the soul frightened by this ugly sight. But I did not see sin, for I believe that it has no kind of substance, no share in being, nor can it be recognized except by the pain caused by it. And it seems to me that this pain is something for a time, for it purges and makes us know ourselves and ask for mercy; for the Passion of our Lord is comfort to us against all this, and that is his blessed will. And because of the tender love which our good Lord has for all who will be saved, he comforts readily and sweetly, meaning this: It is true that sin is the cause of all this pain¹²⁸, but all will be well, and every kind of thing will be well.

These words were revealed most tenderly, showing no kind of blame to me or to anyone who will be saved. So it would be most unkind of me to blame God or marvel at him

124. This omits 'I do not say that I need. . .' and the rest of that paragraph in the short text.

125. The rest of this sentence is not found at this point in the short text.

126. SS agree with the short text: 'denied'.

127. *Ibid.*

128. 'It is true. . . pain': not in the short text.

on account of my sins, since he does not blame me for sin.

And in these same words¹²⁹ I saw hidden in God an exalted and wonderful mystery, which he will make plain and we shall know in heaven. In this knowledge we shall truly see the cause why he allowed sin to come, and in this sight we shall rejoice forever.

The Twenty-Eighth Chapter

So I saw¹³⁰ how Christ has compassion on us because of sin; and just as I was before filled full of pain and compassion on account of Christ's Passion, so I was now in part filled with compassion for all my fellow Christians, because¹³¹ he loves very dearly the people who will be saved, that is to say God's servants. Holy Church will be shaken in sorrow and anguish and tribulation in this world as men shake a cloth in the wind; and in this matter our Lord answered, revealing in this way: Ah, I shall turn this into a great thing, of endless honour and everlasting joy, in heaven. Yes, I even saw that our Lord rejoices with pity and compassion over the tribulations of his servants; and he imposes on every person whom he loves, to bring him to his bliss, something that is no defect in his sight, through which souls are humiliated and despised in this world, scorned and mocked and rejected. And he does this to prevent the harm which they might have from the pomps and the pride and the vainglory of this wretched life, and to prepare their way to come to heaven, into endless, everlasting bliss. For he says: I shall completely break down in you your empty affections and your vicious pride, and then I shall gather you

129. This last paragraph of chapter 27 is not in the short text.

130. Correspondence with the short text resumes; see p. 149.

131. The rest of this paragraph is not in the short text.

and make you meek and mild, pure and holy through union with me.

And then I saw that every natural compassion which one has for one's fellow Christians in love is Christ in us, and that¹³² every kind of self-humiliation which he manifested in his Passion was manifested again in this compassion, in which there were two different understandings of our Lord's intention. One was the bliss that we are brought to, in which he wants us to rejoice. The other is for consolation in our pain, for he wants us to know that it will all be turned to our honour and profit by the power of his Passion, and to know that we suffered in no way alone, but together with him, and to see in him our foundation. And he wants us to see that his pains and his tribulation exceed all that we may suffer so far that it cannot be comprehended in full. And if we well contemplate his will in this, it keeps us from lamenting and despairing as we experience our pains; and if we see truly that our sins deserve them, still his love excuses us. And of his great courtesy he puts away all our blame, and regards us with pity and compassion as innocent and guiltless children.

The Twenty-Ninth Chapter

But in this I stood¹³³, contemplating it generally, darkly and mournfully, saying in intention to our Lord with very great fear: Ah, good Lord, how could all things be well, because of the great harm which has come through sin to your creatures? And here I wished, so far as I dared, for some plainer explanation through which I might be at ease about this matter. And to this our blessed Lord answered,

¹³². The rest of this chapter is not in the short text

¹³³. Correspondence with the short text resumes; but see p. 149, 'But I shall study. . .'

very meekly and with a most loving manner, and he showed that Adam's sin was the greatest harm ever done or ever to be done until the end of the world. And he also showed me that this is plainly known to all Holy Church upon earth.

Furthermore, he taught that I should contemplate the glorious atonement, for this atoning is more pleasing to the blessed divinity and more honourable for man's salvation, without comparison, than ever Adam's sin was harmful. So then this is our blessed Lord's intention, and in this teaching we should pay heed to this: For since I have set right the greatest of harms, then it is my will that you should know through this that I shall set right everything which is less.

The Thirtieth Chapter

He gave understanding of two portions. One portion is our saviour and our salvation. This blessed portion is open, clear, fair and bright and plentiful, for all men who are of good will are comprehended in this portion. We are bound¹³⁴ to this by God, and drawn and counselled and taught, inwardly by the Holy Spirit, and outwardly through the same grace by Holy Church. Our Lord wants us to be occupied in this, rejoicing in him, for he rejoices in us. And the more plentifully we accept from this with reverence and humility, the more do we deserve thanks from him, and the more profit do we win for ourselves. And so we may see and rejoice that our portion is our Lord.

The other portion is hidden from us and closed, that is to say all which is additional to our salvation; for this is our Lord's privy counsel, and it is fitting to God's royal dominion to keep his privy counsel in peace, and it is fitting to his servants out of obedience and respect not to wish to know his counsel.

134. The short text has 'bidden'.

desire, longing and thirst, as I see it, were in him from without beginning; and he will have this until the time that the last soul which will be saved has come up into his bliss.

For as truly as there is in God a quality of pity and compassion, so truly is there in God a quality of thirst and longing; and the power of this longing in Christ enables us to respond to his longing, and without this no soul comes to heaven. And this quality of longing and thirst comes from God's everlasting goodness, just as the quality of pity comes from his everlasting goodness. And though he may have both longing and pity, they are different qualities, as I see them; and this is the characteristic of spiritual thirst, which will persist in him so long as we are in need, and will draw us up into his bliss.

And all this was seen to reveal his compassion, for on Judgment Day that will cease. So he has pity and compassion for us, and he has longing to possess us, but his wisdom and his love do not allow the end to come until the best time.

The Thirty-Second Chapter

On one occasion our good Lord said: Every kind of thing will be well¹⁴¹; and on another occasion he said: You will see yourself that every kind of thing will be well¹⁴². And from these two the soul gained different kinds of understanding. One was this: that he wants us to know that he takes heed not only of things which are noble and great, but also of those which are little and small, of humble men and simple, of this man and that man. And this is what he means when he says: Every kind of thing will be well. For he wants us to know that the smallest thing will not be

141. See p. 225.

142. See p. 229.

forgotten. Another understanding is this: that there are many deeds which in our eyes are so evilly done and lead to such great harms that it seems to us impossible that any good result could ever come of them. And we contemplate this and sorrow and mourn for it so that we cannot rest in the blessed contemplation of God as we ought to do. And the cause is this: that the reason which we use is now so blind, so abject and so stupid that we cannot recognize God's exalted, wonderful wisdom, or the power and the goodness of the blessed Trinity. And this is his intention when he says: You will see yourself that every kind of thing will be well, as if he said: Accept it now in faith and trust, and in the very end you will see truly, in fulness of joy.

And so¹⁴³ in the same five words said before: I may make all things well¹⁴⁴, I understand a powerful comfort from all the works of our Lord God which are still to come.

There is a deed¹⁴⁵ which the blessed Trinity will perform on the last day, as I see it, and what the deed will be and how it will be performed is unknown to every creature who is inferior to Christ, and it will be until the deed is done. The goodness and the love of our Lord God want us to know that this will be, and his power and his wisdom, through the same love, want to conceal it and hide it from us, what it will be and how it will be done. And the cause why he wants us to know it like this is because he wants us to be at ease in our souls and at peace in love, disregarding every disturbance which could hinder our true rejoicing in him.

This is the great deed ordained by our Lord God from without beginning, treasured and hidden in his blessed breast, known only to himself, through which deed he will

143. This paragraph corresponds with the short text; see p. 152.

144. See p. 229

145. The rest of this chapter, and the first two paragraphs of chapter 33, are not in the short text.

make all things well. For just as the blessed Trinity created all things from nothing, just so will the same blessed Trinity make everything well which is not well. And I marvelled greatly at this sight, and contemplated our faith, with this in my mind: Our faith is founded on God's word, and it belongs to our faith that we believe that God's word will be preserved in all things. And one article of our faith is that many creatures will be damned, such as the angels who fell out of heaven because of pride, who now are devils, and many men upon earth who die out of the faith of Holy Church, that is to say those who are pagans and many who have received baptism and who live unchristian lives and so die out of God's love. All these will be eternally condemned to hell, as Holy Church teaches me to believe.

And all this being so, it seemed to me that it was impossible that every kind of thing should be well, as our Lord revealed at this time. And to this I had no other answer as a revelation from our Lord except this: What is impossible to you is not impossible to me. I shall preserve my word in everything, and I shall make everything well. And in this I was taught by the grace of God that I ought to keep myself steadfastly in the faith, as I had understood before, and that at the same time I should stand firm and believe firmly that every kind of thing will be well, as our Lord revealed at that same time. For this is the great deed which our Lord will do, and in this deed he will preserve his word in everything. And he will make well all which is not well. But what the deed will be and how it will be done, there is no creature who is inferior to Christ who knows it, or will know it until it has been done, according to the understanding which I received of our Lord's meaning at this time.