



Life of Anthony

By:

Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria

(Written between 356 – 362)



The life and conversation of our holy Father, Anthony. Written and sent to the monks in foreign parts by our Father among the Saints, Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria.

From: Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria

To: The Monastic Brothers in Foreign Parts.

You have entered into a noble competition, together with the monks of Egypt, by your determination to either equal or surpass them in your training in the way of virtue. There are already monastic dwellings among you and the name “monk” truly designates a certain way of living. With good reason will all men approve of your determination and, in answer to your prayers, God will give it’s fulfillment.

Now since you asked me to give you an account of the blessed Anthony's way of life - how he began the discipline, who and what manner of man he was prior to this, how he his life ended, and whether the things told of him are true so that you also may bring yourselves to imitate him - I have eagerly accepted your request because, for me too, the simple remembrance of Anthony is a great source of help. I also know that you, when you have heard about him, apart from your admiration of the man, will desire to imitate his determination - seeing that for monks, the life of Anthony is a sufficient pattern of discipline. Therefore, do not refuse to believe what you have heard from those who brought news of him; but rather think to yourselves that they have told you only a few things. For,

concerning the events in his life, they can hardly have given circumstances of so great significance in any detail. And because I, at your request, have called to mind a few circumstances about him and shall send as much as I can tell in a letter. Also, do not neglect to question those who sail from here and bring you this letter for it is possible that, when all have told their stories about him, the accounts will still not be in proportion to his merits. Because of this, I was desirous, when I received your letter of request, to send for certain monks who were especially accustomed to be with him more frequently than others so that if I could learn any new details I might send them to you also. Since, however, the season for sailing was coming to an end and the letter-carrier was urgent to depart, I hurried to write to you, my devout brothers, what I know. Having seen him many times, I was able to learn from him and I was also able to learn from his attendant who, for a long time, poured water on his hands. In all points I have been mindful of the truth, that no one should disbelieve through hearing too much nor on the other hand, by hearing too little, should despise the man.

Anthony, you must know, was Egyptian. His parents were of good family and possessed considerable wealth. Since they were Christians, Anthony was raised in the same Faith. In infancy he was brought up with his parents, knowing nothing else but them and his home. When, however, he was grown and arrived at boyhood and was advancing in years, he could not endure to learn letters, not caring to associate with other boys. Instead, all his desire was, as it is written of Jacob, to live a plain man at home. With his parents he used to attend the Lord's House and neither as a child was he idle nor when older did he despise them but was both obedient to his father and mother and attentive to what was read, keeping in his heart what was profitable in what he heard. Even though he was a child brought up in moderate wealth, he did not trouble his parents for varied or luxurious fare, nor was this a source of pleasure to him; but he was content simply with what he found nor did he look for anything further.

After the death of his father and mother, he was left alone with one little sister. He was about eighteen or twenty at the time and the care both of the home and his sister fell upon him. It was not six months after the death of his parents and, going according to custom

into the Lord's House, he thought to himself and reflected as he walked how the Apostles left all and followed the Savior. He considered how the Book of Acts related that the disciples sold their possessions and brought and laid them at the Apostles' feet for distribution to the needy and what type and how great a hope was laid up for them in heaven. Pondering over these things, he entered the church and it happened the Gospel was being read and he heard the Lord saying to the rich man, "If you would be perfect, go and sell all that you have and give to the poor and come, follow Me, and you will have treasure in heaven". Anthony, as though God had put him in mind of the Saints and the passage had been read specifically because of him, went out immediately from the church and gave the possessions of his forefathers to the villagers - there were three hundred acres, productive and very fair - that they should no longer be a hindrance upon himself and his sister. All the rest that was movable he sold. Then, having accumulated much money, he gave it to the poor. He did reserve, however, a little money for his sister's sake.

Again, as he went into the church and hearing the Lord say in the Gospel, "do not be anxious about tomorrow", he could stay no longer but went out and gave those things to the poor also. Having committed his sister to known and faithful virgins and put her with them to be brought up, from then on he devoted himself outside his house to discipline - taking heed to himself and training himself with patience. At that time, there still were not many monastic dwellings in Egypt and there was no monk that lived in the distant desert. Instead, all who wished to pay attention to their lives practiced the discipline in solitude near their own village. Now in the next village there was an old man had lived the life of solitude from his youth up. Anthony, after he had seen this man, imitated him in piety. At first, he began to abide in places outside the village. Then, if he heard of a good man anywhere, like the prudent bee, he went forth and sought for him. He did not turn back to his own dwelling until he had seen him. He returned to his dwelling after having received from the good man supplies, as it were, for his journey in the way of virtue. So dwelling outside the village at first, he confirmed his purpose not to return to the dwelling of his fathers nor to the remembrance of his relatives; but to keep all his desire and energy for perfecting his discipline. He worked, however, with his hands, having heard, "he

who is idle, do not let him eat". A portion of his earnings he spent on bread and a portion he gave to the needy. He was constant in prayer, knowing that a man ought to pray in secret unceasingly. He did this because he had given such heed to what was read that none of the things that were written fell from him to the ground but he remembered all and afterwards his memory served him for books.

Conducting himself in this manner, Anthony was loved by all. He sincerely subjected himself to the good men he visited and learned thoroughly where each surpassed him in zeal and discipline. He observed the graciousness of one and the unceasing prayer of another. He took knowledge of another's freedom from anger and another's loving-kindness. He gave heed to one as he watched, to another as he studied. One he admired for his endurance and another for his fasting and sleeping on the ground. The meekness of one and the long-suffering of another he watched with care, while he took note of the devoutness they had towards Christ and the mutual love that animated all of them. Thus filled, he returned to his own place of discipline and would strive to unite the qualities of each person he saw and was eager to produce in himself all of the virtues he had witnessed. With others of the same age he had no rivalry except this - that he should not be second to them in higher things. He did this in such a way so that the feelings of others were not hurt but, instead, he caused them rejoice over him. So all the people of his village and the good men in whose intimacy he was, when they saw that he was a man of this sort, used to call him "God-beloved". Some welcomed him as a son, others as a brother.

But the devil, who hates and envies what is good, could not tolerate to see such resolution in a youth and made a serious effort to carry out against him what he had been accustomed to put into effect against others. First, he tried to lead him away from the discipline by whispering to him the remembrance of his wealth, care for his sister, claims of his kindred, love of money, love of honor, the various pleasures of delicious food and the other relaxations of life, and, finally, the difficulty of virtuous living and the struggle it requires. He suggested also the weakness of the body and the length of the time he would have to endure – day in and day out - this struggle. In a word, he aroused a great dust-cloud of debate in his mind wishing to detach him from his settled purpose. When, however, the enemy

saw himself to be too weak for Anthony's determination and that, instead, he was conquered by the other's firmness, overthrown by his great faith, and falling because of his constant prayers, the enemy eventually put his trust in the weapons which are "in the navel of his belly" and, boasting in them, (for they are his first snare for the young) he attacked the young man. He disturbed him by night and harassed him by day, so that even the onlookers saw the struggle that was going on between them. The evil one would suggest foul thoughts and the other would counter them with prayers. The evil one would inflame him with lust while Anthony, as one who seemed to blush, fortified his body with faith, prayers, and fasting. The devil, unhappy being he is, one night even took upon him the shape of a woman and imitated all her acts simply to entice, charm, captivate and lure Anthony. But he, his mind filled with Christ and the nobility inspired by Him, and considering the spirituality of the soul, quenched the fire of the other's deceit.

Again, the enemy suggested the ease of pleasure. He, however, like a man filled with intense grief, turned his thoughts to the threatened fire and the gnawing worm, and, setting these in array against his adversary, passed through the temptation unscathed. All this was a source of shame to his foe because he, considering himself like God, was now mocked by a young man. The evil one, who boasted to himself with utter scorn and derision against flesh and blood, was being put to flight by a man in the flesh. For the Lord was working with Anthony - the Lord who for our sake took flesh and gave the body victory over the devil, so that all who truly fight can say, "not I, but the grace of God which was with me".

Finally, when the dragon could not overthrow Anthony even with this enticement but saw himself thrust out of his heart and, being beside himself and gnashing his teeth as it were, he appeared to Anthony like a black boy, taking a visible form in harmony with the color of his darkened mind. Cringing to him, as it were, he no longer wrestled him and tried to derail him with thoughts because, even though he was skillfully cunning, Anthony had gotten the better of him. After a while, he spoke in a human voice and said, "Many I have deceived. Many I have cast down...but now, attacking you and your labors, as I had many others, I proved weak". Then Anthony asked him, "Who are you who speaks with me about this?" He answered

with a pitiful voice, "I am the friend of whoredom and have taken upon me the stimulation of passions which lead to it against the young. I am called the spirit of lust! How many have I deceived who wished to live soberly! How many are the chaste who, by my stimulations of their passions, I have persuaded! I am the one who, on account of me, the prophet reproves those who have fallen saying, "You have been caused to err by the spirit of whoredom". Because of me, they have been snared and made to stumble. I am the one who has very often troubled you and have very often been overthrown by you". But Anthony, having given thanks to the Lord, with good courage said to him, "You are very despicable then, for you are black-hearted and weak as a child. From now on, I shall no longer have trouble from you because 'the Lord is my helper, and I shall look down on mine enemies'". After hearing this, the black one immediately fled, shuddering at the words and dreading even to come near the man any longer.

This was Anthony's first struggle against the devil, or rather this victory was the Savior's work in Anthony, "Who condemned sin in the flesh that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit". After this Anthony, although the evil one had fallen, did not relax his watchfulness and despise him. Nor did the enemy, as though utterly conquered, cease to lay snares for him because he continued stalk him as a hungry lion, seeking some occasion to ambush his prey. But Anthony, having learned from the Scriptures that the strategies of the devil are many, zealously continued the discipline believing that though the devil had not been able to deceive his heart with the enticement of bodily pleasure, he would endeavor to ensnare him by other means because the demon loves sin. Because of this, more and more Anthony repressed his body and kept it in subjection for fear that possibly, having conquered on one front, he should be defeated on another. He planned, therefore, to accustom himself to an even more rigorous manner of life. Many people marveled at him but he used to bear the labor easily because of the eagerness of his soul, which had been fashioned over time in the practice of virtue. Taking only a little initiation from others, he showed great enthusiasm in this matter. He kept vigil to such an extent that he often continued the whole night without sleep. This did not happen only one time but often, to the marvel of others. He ate once a day, after sunset. Sometimes, once

in two days and often even one time in four days. His food was bread and salt and his drink was only water. Concerning his consumption of meat and wine, it is unnecessary even to speak of these things since no such food was found among the other earnest men. He slept upon a rush mat but, most of the time, he just lay upon the bare ground. He would not anoint himself with oil, saying it was appropriate for young men to be earnest in training and not to seek what would pamper the body; but they must accustom it to labor, mindful of the Apostle's words, "when I am weak, then I am strong". "For", Anthony said, "the character of the soul is then sound when the pleasures of the body are diminished". He had come to this truly wonderful conclusion that progress in virtue and retirement from the world for the sake of it, should not to be measured by time but, instead, by desire and resoluteness of purpose. He gave no thought to the past but, day by day, as if he were at the beginning of his discipline, applied greater cares for his advancement in virtue, often repeating to himself the saying of Paul: "Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before". He was also mindful of the words spoken by the prophet Elijah, "the Lord lives – the one before whose presence I stand today". Anthony observed that in saying "today" the prophet did not compute the time that had gone by but daily, as though ever commencing anew, he eagerly endeavored to make himself fit to appear before God being pure in heart and ever ready to submit to His counsel and to Him alone. Anthony used to say to himself that from the life of the great Elijah the hermit he should see his own life as in a mirror.

Thus, tightening his hold upon himself, Anthony departed to the tombs which happened to be a distance from the village. After having told one of his acquaintances to bring him bread at intervals of many days apart, he entered one of the tombs while the other acquaintance shut the door on him. Thus, Anthony was alone inside the tomb. When the enemy could not endure it any longer and became fearful that in a short time Anthony would fill the desert with the discipline, he came to him one night with a multitude of demons and cut him with stripes so that he lay on the ground speechless from the excessive pain. He affirmed that the torture had been so excessive that no blows inflicted by man could ever have caused him such torment. But, by the Providence of God - for the Lord never overlooks them that hope in Him - the next day his acquaintance came bringing him

the loaves of bread. Having opened the door and seeing him lying on the ground as though dead, he lifted him up, carried him to the church in the village and laid him upon the ground. Then, many of his kinsfolk and the villagers sat around Anthony as around a corpse. But about midnight he came to himself and arose, and when he saw them all asleep and his comrade alone watching, he motioned with his head for him to approach, and asked him to carry him again to the tombs without waking anybody.

The man carried him to the tomb and, as he was accustomed to, when the door was shut he was within the tomb all alone. But he could not stand up on account of the blows, so he prayed as he lay there on the ground. After he had prayed, he said with a shout, "Here I am, Anthony! I do not flee from your stripes, for even if you inflict more nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ". Then he sang, "though a camp is set against me, my heart shall not be afraid". These were the thoughts and words of this ascetic. But the enemy, who hates good, marveling that after the blows he dared to return, called together his hounds and burst forth, "You all see," he said, "that neither by the spirit of lust nor by blows did we stop the man but that he braves us still. Let us attack him in another fashion". But changes of form for evil purposes are easy for the devil, so in the night they made such a disturbance that the whole place seemed to be shaken by an earthquake and the demons, as if breaking the four walls of the dwelling, seemed to enter through them coming in the likeness of beasts and creeping things. Then the place was suddenly filled with the forms of lions, bears, leopards, bulls, serpents, asps, scorpions, and wolves – each one of them was moving according to his nature. The lion was roaring, wishing to attack. The bull was tossing its horns about. The serpent was twisting and squirming as snakes do but was unable to approach. The wolf, as it rushed forward, was restrained. Altogether, the noises of the apparitions with their angry raging were dreadful. Anthony, stricken and provoked by them, felt bodily pains more severe still. He laid there watching, however, with unshaken soul, although groaning from bodily anguish. His mind was clear, however, and as in mockery he said, "If there had been any power in you, it would have been sufficient had only one of you come. But since the Lord has made you weak, you attempt to terrify me by numbers. Yes, a proof of your weakness is that you take the shapes of brute beasts". With

boldness he continued, "If you are able, and have received power against me, do not delay to attack me; but if you are unable, why in vain do you trouble me? For faith in our Lord is a seal and a wall of safety to us". So, after many attempts, they gnashed their teeth upon him in anger and frustration because they were mocking themselves rather than him.

The Lord was not forgetful of Anthony's wrestling but was at hand to help him. Looking up, he saw the roof as if it were opened and a ray of light descending to him. Then the demons suddenly vanished, the pain of his body immediately ceased and the building was again whole. Anthony, feeling the help and getting his breath again and being freed from pain, besought the vision that had appeared to him, saying, "Where were you? Why did you not appear at the beginning to make my pains to cease?" A voice came to him, "Anthony, I was here, but I waited to see your fight. Because of which, since you have endured and have not been outdone, I will always be a help and a relief to you and will make your name known everywhere". Having heard this, Anthony arose, prayed, and received such strength that he perceived that he had more power in his body than he formerly had. He was about thirty-five years old at this time.

The next day, he went out even more eagerly determined on the service of God. Having fallen in with the old man he had met previously, he asked him to dwell with him in the desert. When the old man declined, however, because of his great age and because as yet there was no such custom, Anthony, by himself, immediately set off for the mountain. Again, the enemy, seeing his zeal and wishing to put a stop to it, cast in his way what seemed to be a great silver dish. But Anthony, seeing the cleverness of the Evil One, stood, and having looked on the dish, he put the devil in it to shame, saying, "Where does a dish come from in the desert? This road is not traveled on very often nor is there a trace of any traveler around here. Because of its size, it could not have fallen without being missed and he who had lost it, having turned back to seek it, would have found it, for it is a barren, empty desert. This is some ploy of the devil. O you Evil One, not with this shall you prevent my purpose; let it go with you to destruction!" When Anthony had said this, it vanished like smoke from the face of fire.

Next, as he went on, he saw real gold scattered in the way (this was not an illusion as the previous incident was). Whether it was the devil or some better power that showed it to try the athlete and demonstrate to the Evil One that Anthony truly did not care for money, Anthony did not say nor do we know. It is certain, however, that that which appeared was gold. Anthony marveled at the quantity of it but quickly passed it by as though he were walking on hot coals - he did not even turn, but hurried on at a run to lose sight of the place. More and more confirmed in his purpose, he hurried on to the mountain. On the other side of the river, he saw a fort that had been deserted for so long that it was full of creeping things. He crossed the river and dwelt there. The reptiles, as though someone were chasing them, immediately left the place. He then built up the entrance completely since he had stored up enough loaves of bread to last for six months (this is a custom of the Thebans - the loaves often remain fresh a whole year). He also found water inside the fort. Thus settled, he descended as into a shrine, and abode within by himself, never going forth nor looking at any one who came. As a result, he employed a long time training himself. He received a new supply of bread loaves, let down from above, twice a year.

Those of his acquaintances who came, since he did not permit them to enter, often used to spend days and nights outside and heard what sounded like a crowd inside the fort shouting and making a commotion, sending forth pitiful voices crying out, "Go from what is ours! What are you doing here in the desert? You cannot put up with our attack!" At first, those outside thought there were some men fighting with Anthony who had entered with the use of ladders. But, stooping down and peering through a hole, they saw that there was no one. They were afraid, believing them to be demons and they called out for Anthony. He quickly heard them call even though he had not given a thought to the demons clamor and, coming to the door, he asked them to depart and not to be afraid: "For", he said, "this is how the demons make their seeming onslaughts against those who are cowardly. Therefore, sign yourselves with the cross and depart boldly. Let these continue to make a mockery of themselves". So they departed, fortified with the sign of the cross. Anthony remained and was in no way harmed by the evil spirits nor was he wore-out with the contest for there came to his aid visions from above and the weakness of the foe relieved him of much trouble and fortified

him with greater zeal. His acquaintances often used to come expecting to find him dead and, instead, would hear him singing, “Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered. Let them also that hate Him flee before His face. As smoke vanishes, let them vanish; as wax melts before the face of fire, so let the sinners perish from the face of God” and “All nations compassed me about, and in the name of the Lord I paid them back”.

For nearly twenty years he continued training himself in solitude, never going out. Very rarely was he seen by anyone. After this, when many were eager and desiring to imitate his discipline, his acquaintances came and began to pry open and take-off the door by force. Anthony, as from a shrine, came out, initiated in the mysteries and filled with the Spirit of God. Then, for the first time, he was seen outside the fort by those who came to see him. And they, when they saw him, wondered at the sight, for he had the same body shape as before – he was neither fat, like a man without exercise, nor lean from fasting and striving with the demons, but he was exactly the same as they had known him before his withdrawal into the desert. Also, his soul was free from blemish, for it was neither contracted as if by grief nor relaxed by pleasure nor possessed by laughter or dejection, for he was not troubled when he saw the crowd nor overjoyed at being saluted by so many. Instead, he was altogether evenly composed as being guided by reason and abiding in a natural state. Through him the Lord healed the bodily ailments of many present and cleansed others from evil spirits. The Lord gave grace to Anthony in speaking, so that he consoled many that were sorrowful and put those who were in conflict with each other at peace with each other for he urged all to prefer the love of Christ before all that is in the world. While he exhorted and advised them to remember the good things to come and the loving-kindness of God towards us, “Who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all”, he also persuaded many to embrace the solitary life. Consequently, cells arose and the mountains and desert was colonized by monks who went there from their own people and enrolled themselves for the citizenship in the heavens.

Now once, when the brothers visited Anthony, he was obliged to cross the Arsenoitic Canal (which was full of crocodiles). Simply praying, he and all his companions entered the river and passed

through it safely. Returning to his cell, he applied himself to the same noble and valiant exercises. By frequent conversation, he increased the eagerness of those already monks and stirred up a love and admiration of the discipline in most other people who were not monks by the attraction of his words. Cells multiplied in the desert and he directed them all as a father.

One day he came out of the fort because all the monks had assembled outside of it asking him to teach them. Thus, he came out and spoke to them in the Egyptian language saying: “The Scriptures are enough for instruction but it is a good thing to encourage one another in the faith and to stir up enthusiasm with our words. For this reason, you, as children, carry that which you know to your father and I, as the elder, share my knowledge and what experience has taught me with you. Above all, let this be the mutual intention of all: neither to give up once you have begun nor to faint when distress and troubles come nor to say: ‘We have lived in the discipline a long time’. Instead, treating each day as if you were just starting the discipline, let us ever increase our earnestness remembering that the whole life of man is very short, measured by the ages to come. Because this is so, all our time here is nothing compared with the eternal life to come. In the world, everything is sold at its price - a person exchanges one equivalent for another. This is not the case, however, with the promise of eternal life – it is bought for almost nothing! For it is written, ‘The days of our life are seventy years – eighty if our health is good. And even the best of them is filled with labor and sorrow’ (Psalm 90:10). Thus, even if we live a full eighty, or even a hundred years in the discipline, we shall not reign for a hundred equivalent years also but instead, we shall reign forever and ever! And though we fought on earth, we shall not receive our inheritance on earth, but we have the promises in heaven! Finally, once we have put off this body, which is mortal, we shall receive it back as immortal.

Because this is true, my children, let us not faint under hardship nor consider that the time is long or that we are doing something great for the ‘sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us’. Nor let us think, as we look at the world, that we have renounced anything of much consequence, for the whole earth is very small compared with all the heaven. For which reason, even if by chance we were lords

over all the earth and gave it all up, it would still be nothing worthy of comparison with the kingdom of heaven because it is as if a man should despise a single copper coin to gain a hundred coins of pure gold. Therefore, even if a man was lord of all the earth and was to renounce it, that which he gives up is little, and he receives a hundredfold in return. If the whole earth is not equal in value to the heavens, then he who has given up a few acres leaves, as it were, nothing. Even if he has given up a house or much gold, he should not brag nor feel sad. Furthermore, we should consider that even if we do not relinquish them now for virtue's sake we will, when we die, relinquish them at that time and very often, as the Preacher says, to those to whom we do not wish. Why then should we not give them up for virtue's sake, that we may inherit even a kingdom? Therefore let the desire of possessions take hold of no one, for what gain is it to acquire things that we cannot take with us? Why not, instead, get those things that we can take away with us when we die: discretion, righteousness, self-control, courage, understanding, love, kindness to the poor, faith in Christ, freedom from anger, and hospitality? If we possess these, we shall find them of themselves preparing for us a welcome there in the land of the meek-hearted.

Considering the things just mentioned, let a man persuade himself not to make light of abandoning the discipline, especially if he considers that he himself is the servant of the Lord and should serve his Master. For this reason, a servant would never dare to say, 'because I worked yesterday, I will not work today!' - deciding he will not work because of what he did yesterday. Instead, as it is written in the Gospel, the servant shows the same readiness every day so that he may please his master and to avoid risk. In the same way, let us daily abide firm in our discipline knowing that if we are careless for a single day the Lord will not pardon us, for the sake of the past, but will be angry against us for our neglect. This is what we have heard in Ezekiel (Ezekiel 18:26) and saw in the life of Judas who, because of one night, destroyed all his previous labor.

For this reason, children, let us resolutely hold to our discipline and not be careless. For in our discipline, the Lord is our fellow-worker; as it is written, 'to all that choose the good, God works with them for good'. To avoid being careless, it is good to consider the word of the Apostle, 'I die daily'(1 Corinthians 15:31). For if we also

live as though we die daily, we will not sin. This saying means that each day when we wake-up, we should think to ourselves that we will not remain alive even until the evening. Again, when about to lie down to sleep, we should think that we will not rise up again. We need to consider this: our life is naturally uncertain and Providence allots it to us daily. Ordering our daily life in this way, we shall neither fall into sin, nor have a lust for anything, nor take pleasure in being angry against anyone, nor shall we heap up treasure upon earth. However, living with the daily expectation of death, we shall be without wealth and shall forgive all things to all men, nor shall we retain at all the desire of women or of any other foul pleasure. Instead, we shall turn from them as things in the past and now gone, ever striving and looking forward to the dreadful Day of Judgment. For the greater fear and danger of torment always serves to destroy the desire for the ease of pleasure and helps the soul that is on the brink of giving up.

For this reason, having already begun and set out in the way of virtue, let us strive with even more determination so that we may attain those things that are before us. Let no one turn back to the things behind, like Lot's wife, all the more so since the Lord has said, 'No man, having put his hand to the plough and turning back, is fit for the kingdom of heaven'. This turning back is nothing else but to feel regret and to become once more worldly-minded. But do not fear to hear of virtue, nor be overwhelmed at the name because it is not far from us, nor is it outside ourselves but it is within us and it is easy if we are only willing. The Greeks, so that they may acquire knowledge, live abroad and cross the sea - but we have no need to depart from our home for the sake of the kingdom of heaven nor to cross the sea for the sake of acquiring virtue. Why is this? Because the Lord said that, 'The kingdom of heaven is within you'. Since this is so, the only thing virtue has need from us is our willingness alone - since it is in us and is formed from us. When the soul has its spiritual faculty in a natural state, virtue is formed. It is in a natural state when it remains as it came into existence and when it came into existence it was unsullied and exceedingly honest. For this cause Joshua, the son of Nun, in his exhortation said to the people, 'Make your heart straight unto the Lord God of Israel', and John said, 'Make your paths straight'. Thus, the rectitude of soul consists in its having its spiritual part in its natural state as created. On the other hand, when it

swerves and turns away from its natural state, that is called vice of the soul – thus, the matter is not difficult. If we abide as we have been made, we are in a state of virtue but if we think base things, we will be considered evil. If, therefore, this thing had to be acquired from without, it would be difficult in reality. But if it is in us, let us keep ourselves from foul thoughts. Since we have received the soul as a deposit, let us preserve it for the Lord that He may recognize His work as being the same as He made it.

Let us strive so that anger does not rule us nor lust overcome us for it is written, 'The anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God'(James 1:20) and 'lust, when it has conceived, births sin, and sin, when it is accomplished, births death'(James 1:15). Living like this, let us keep guard carefully and, as it is written, 'keep our hearts with all watchfulness'. Because we have formidable and devious foes - the evil spirits - and against them 'we wrestle', as the Apostle said, 'Not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities and the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places'(Ephesians 6:10). Great is their number in the air around us and they are not far from us. Now there are great distinctions among them. Concerning their nature and distinctions I could say a great deal but such a description is for others of greater powers than we possess. For now, however, the urgent need right now and what is necessary for us to know is only about their cunning strategies they employ against us.

First, we must know this: that the demons have not been created like what we mean when we call them by that name - for God made nothing evil but even they have been made good. Having fallen from the heavenly wisdom, however, since then, they have been groveling on earth. On the one hand, they deceived the Greeks with their displays, while out of envy of us Christians they move all things, in their desire to hinder us from entry into the heavens, in order that we should not ascend to that place from where they fell. Because of this, there is need of much prayer and of discipline, that when a man has received through the Spirit the gift of discerning spirits, he may have power to recognize their characteristics: which ones are less evil and which ones are more, of what nature is the special pursuit of each one, and how each of them is overthrown and

cast out. For their evil acts and the changes in their clandestine hostile plans are many. The blessed Apostle and his followers knew such things when they said, 'for we are not ignorant of his devices' and we, from the temptations we have suffered at their hands, should guide those who are undergoing those temptations. For this reason, I, having had proof of them, speak to you as to children.

The demons, therefore, if they see all Christians and monks especially, laboring cheerfully and advancing, first make an attack by temptation and place hindrances to hamper our way, that is to say, evil thoughts. But we do not need to fear their suggestions for by prayer, fasting, and faith in the Lord their attack immediately fails. But even when it does fail, they do not cease their attack but deceitfully and with cleverly indirect and ingenious machinations they come on again. For when they cannot deceive the heart openly with foul pleasures they approach in different guise and thenceforth shaping displays they attempt to strike fear, changing their shapes, taking the forms of women, wild beasts, creeping things, gigantic bodies, and troops of soldiers. Not even then, however, do you need to fear their deceitful displays because they are nothing and quickly disappear, especially if a man fortifies himself beforehand with faith and the sign of the cross. Yet are they bold and shameless, for if thus they are beaten then they make an onslaught in another manner – they pretend to prophesy and foretell the future and to show themselves of a height reaching to the roof and of great breadth; that they may stealthily catch by such displays those who could not be deceived by their arguments. If here also they find the soul strengthened by faith and a hopeful mind, then they bring their leader to their aid”.

Anthony said the demons often appeared as the Lord revealed the devil to Job saying, "His eyes are bright like the morning star. From his mouth proceed comet-like fireballs; streams of fire spew forth from it. The smoke of a furnace, blazing with the fire of coals, proceeds from his nostrils. His breath is as hot coals and from his mouth flames leap out." When the prince of the demons appears like this, the crafty one as I said before, strikes terror by speaking great things. This is just as the Lord spoke of him saying to Job: "he considers iron as straw and brass as rotten wood. Yes, he counts the sea as if it were water contained in a jar; the depth of the sea he

holds in the palm of his hand, the depth of the sea is as a covered walk". By the prophet he said, "the enemy said, I will pursue and overtake" and again by another, "I will grasp the whole world in my hand as a nest and take it up as eggs that have been left unprotected"(Isaiah 10:14). Such, in a word, is their proud bragging and declaration that they may deceive the godly. Not even then, however, should we, the faithful, fear his appearance or pay attention to his words because he is a liar and never speaks a truthful word. Although speaking so many words with such great boldness, without doubt, like a dragon, he was drawn with a hook by the Savior and as a beast of burden he received the halter around his snout. Like a runaway slave, his nostrils were bound with a ring and his lips bored with a bracelet. The Lord bound him in the same way that a person confines a sparrow to a cage, so that we should mock him. Placed with him are his associates, the demons, who, like serpents and scorpions, are to be crushed underfoot by us Christians. The proof of this is that we now live opposed to him and his ways. For he who threatened to dry the sea and take hold of the whole world, now marvel at this fact, cannot now stop our discipline or even me speaking out against him! Since this is so, let us pay no attention to his words for he is a liar. Also, let us not fear his visions, seeing that they themselves are also deceptive because that which appears in his visions is no true light but, rather, it is the prelude and likeness of the fire prepared for the demons who attempt to terrify men with those flames in which they themselves will be burned. Without question they appear but in a moment they disappear again, hurting none of the faithful but, instead, they bring with them the image of that fire in which they themselves will soon be tormented. Since this is so, it is not proper that we should fear them because of these things; for through the grace of Christ all their practices are in vain.

They are treacherous and ready to change themselves into all forms and assume any appearances necessary to deceive. Very often, without even appearing, they imitate the music of the harp and voice and recall the words of Scripture. Sometimes, too, while we are reading, they immediately repeat many times, like an echo, what we have just read. They arouse us from our sleep to say prayers; they do this constantly, hardly allowing us to sleep at all. At other times, they will assume the appearance of monks and pretend to speak like holy men that by their similarity to them they might deceive and, as a

result, drag their victims wherever they desire. We, for our part, must not pay any attention to them even if they arouse to prayer or if they counsel us not to eat at all. We must not pay any attention to them even though they now seem to accuse us and cast shame upon us for doing those things (i.e. sleeping and eating) which they previously allowed. They do not do this for the sake of obedience to God or truth. No, they do this so that they may carry off the simple to despair so that they might give-up and say that the discipline is hopeless and make men loathe the solitary life as a trouble and burden and hinder those, who in spite of the demons, continue to walk in it.

Because this is so, the prophet sent by the Lord declared them to be wretched saying: "How terrible it will be for the one who gives his neighbors contaminated, dirty water to drink". He said this because their usual pattern of actions and tactics of are designed to overthrow, rather than strengthen, the way that leads to virtue. In addition, the Lord Himself, even if the demons spoke the truth - for they said truthfully "You are the Son of God" - still restrained them and did not allow them to speak because he was concerned that they might sow their evil mixed in with the truth. He also did this that he might get us in the habit of never listening to them even though they appear to speak what is true. For it is not appropriate that we, having the Holy Scriptures and freedom from the Savior, should be taught by the devil who has not kept his own order but has gone from one mind to a darkened one. For this reason, even when he uses the language of Scripture, the Lord forbids him, saying: "But to the sinner God said: 'For this reason do you declare My ordinances and takes My covenant in your mouth?'". For the demons do all things - they talk nonsensically and for long stretches about nothing important, they confuse, they dissemble, they confound – all to deceive the simple. They make a loud and continued clamor – a cacophony of sounds, laugh madly, and whistle; but if no attention is paid to them, they immediately weep and lament as though vanquished.

Because their real motive is to deceive, the Lord, as God, did not allow the demons to speak. This being the case, it is also appropriate that we, taught by the saints way of life, should do like them and imitate their courage. When they encountered these things, they used to say: "When the sinner raged against me, I remained silent and humble and did not say a word in my defense".

Again: “But I was as a deaf man and did not hear what was spoken to me and, like one who could not speak, I did not say a word in response. I became as a man who does not hear anything at all”. So let us, as if they were complete strangers to us, neither listen to them nor pay any attention to them even though they arouse us to prayer and speak to us about fasting. Instead, let us apply ourselves to our resolve of discipline and let us not be deceived by them who do all things in deceit, even though they threaten us with death for they are weak and can do nothing but threaten.

I have briefly spoken to you about these things. Now, I must not shrink from speaking on them at greater length because to bring these things back to your remembrance will help to keep you safe. Since the Lord visited earth, the enemy is fallen and his powers weakened. For this reason, although in reality he cannot do anything, still, like a tyrant, he did not tolerate his fall submissively and quietly but threatened – yet his threats are only words and nothing more. Each person needs to reflect on this and he will be able to despise the attacks and empty threats of the demons. Now, if the demons were limited in their abilities by having physical bodies just as we are limited, it would be possible for them to say, “When men hide themselves, we cannot find them but whenever we do find them we hurt and injure them”. If this were the case, we could escape them by hiding ourselves and shutting the doors against them to protect us. If, however, they are not hindered by a physical body as we are but, instead, are able to enter into a place even though the doors are shut, and they dwell in all the air around us (both they and their leader the devil), and they desire to do evil and are always ready to injure and, as the Savior said, “From the beginning the devil is a manslayer and a father of vice” – even though this is all true about them, it is plain they are powerless since we are still alive and spend our lives particularly in opposition to them; for place is no hindrance to their plots nor do they look on us as friends that they should spare us nor are they lovers of good that they should amend their ways. On the contrary, they are evil and nothing is more sought after by them as is wounding them that love virtue and fear God. Since, however, they have no power to affect anything, they do nothing more than to threaten. If they were able, they would not hesitate but immediately work evil (for all their desire is set on this), especially against us! Look at this - we are gathered together and speak against them – and

they have not stopped us! They know that when we advance in virtue, they grow weaker and weaker against us. If they genuinely had the power that they threaten us with, they would not permit any of us Christians to live because godliness is an abomination to a sinner. Since they cannot do anything, however, they inflict the greater wounds on themselves because they cannot fulfill any of their threats. The next thing we should consider so that we might not fear them is this: if they really had power, they would not come in large numbers at one time nor create fearsome displays nor would they have to change their appearance in order to deceive us. Instead, it would be sufficient that one only should come and accomplish that which he was both able and willing to do. This is true of everyone who has real power – they do not slay someone by making fearsome displays nor strike fear in them by making a large commotion. No, they do not do that. Instead, they immediately make full use of their authority however they desire. But the demons, as they have no power, are like actors on the stage changing their shape and frightening children with tumultuous apparitions and various forms. Because of this, they should be despised instead of feared since they are really showing their weakness and not their power. Consider this: the true angel of the Lord sent against the Assyrians had no need to make a large commotion, put on a fearsome display, or make noises and rattlings but quietly used his power and immediately destroyed a hundred and eighty-five thousand. But demons like these, who have no power, try to at least terrify by their displays.

If someone who is thinking about what happened to Job should ask, 'If what you say is true, then why was the devil able to go forth and do all the things against Job that he did? He stripped him of all his possessions, killed his children, and struck him with dreadful boils?'. Let the one who asks this question also recognize that, on the other hand, the devil was not the strong one but God who delivered Job to him to be tested. Certainly, he had no power to do anything but he asked for permission and, having received it, he brought about what he did. This is also another example where the enemy, once again, is shown to be powerless for, although he wanted to, he could not prevail against one just man. If he were able, he would not have asked permission but by having asked permission, not once but also a second time, he shows his weakness and lack of power. It is not amazing that he could not do anything against Job –

if God had not allowed it, destruction would not have occurred even on his cattle. He does not even have power over swine for in the Gospel the demons entreated the Lord saying, "Let us enter the swine". If they did not have power even against swine, how much less do they have over humans formed in the image of God!

So then, we should only fear God. We should despise the demons and not be afraid of them. The more they do these things against us, the more we should intensify our discipline against them because a good life and faith in God is a great weapon. At any rate, they fear the fasting, the sleeplessness, the prayers, the meekness, the quietness, the contempt of money and vainglory, the humility, the love of the poor, the alms, the freedom from anger of the ascetics, and, chief of all, their devotion and obedience towards Christ. Because they fear these things, they do all they can to stop any from trampling upon them knowing the grace given to the faithful against them by the Savior, when He says, "Behold I have given to you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy".

For this reason, if they pretend to foretell the future, do not pay any attention to them for often they will announce beforehand that some brothers are coming in a few days - and they do come! The demons, however, do not do this because they care for the one who listens to them but in order to gain their trust and then, after some time, having gained their trust and gotten them in their power, they may destroy them. Because of this, we must not listen to them at all but, instead, we should deny them a hearing when they speak since we do not need them. For what wonder is it if, when possessing different type bodies than humans have, they have seen them start on their journey and, surpassing them in speed, announce their coming in advance? Just as a horseman getting a start of a man on foot announces the arrival of the latter beforehand, just like this there is no need for us to wonder at them. For they do not know about any of the things that are not yet in existence but God is the only one who knows all things before they come into being. But these, like thieves, immediately run off with what they see and proclaim it. How many brothers have they already announced our business too - that we are assembled together and discussing actions against them, before any one of us could go and tell these things ourselves? This, in good

truth, a fast boy could do, getting far ahead of one less swift. What I mean is this: If any one begins to walk from the Thebaid, or from any other district, before he begins to walk, they do not know whether he will walk or not; but, once they see him start walking, they run ahead and, before he arrives, they report his approach. So it ends up that after a few days the travelers do arrive. Often, however, the walkers turn back and the demons prove false.

It is also this way with the water of the river. Sometimes they make foolish statements: having seen that there has been a lot of rain in the regions of Ethiopia and knowing that these excessive rains cause the river to flood over, they run ahead and announce it before the floodwaters have reached Egypt. This is something men could have told if they were able to travel as swiftly as the demons. Just as David's spies positioned themselves on a very high place and could see men approaching better than the ones who stayed below and a forerunner would announce, before the others came up, not those things which had not taken place but those things which were already on the way and were being accomplished, in this way the demons also prefer to labor and declare what is happening to others simply for the sake of deceiving them. If, however, God's providence has planned anything different for the waters or wayfarers - for Providence can do this - the demons are deceived and those who listened to them are cheated.

This is how, in days gone by, the oracles of the Greeks arose and the demons led them astray. Their deception, however, was brought to an end by the coming of the Lord who, from that time on, brought to nothing the demons and their devices. For they do not know anything of themselves but, like thieves, what they get to know from others they pass on and guess at rather than foretell things. Since this is so, if sometimes they speak the truth, do not marvel at them because of this for even experienced physicians also, since they see the same malady in different people, often foretell what the problem is - they figure this out because of their long experience with the various diseases and what symptoms each disease manifests. Sailors and farmers, both, from their familiarity with the weather, tell at a glance the state of the atmosphere and forecast whether it will be stormy or good weather. No one would say that they do this by inspiration but from experience and practice. Therefore, if the

demons can sometimes do the same by guesswork based on previous experience they have gained, let no one wonder at it or pay any attention to them. What use to the hearers is it to know from them what is going to happen before the time? In addition, what concern do we have to know such things, even if the knowledge is true, for it does not produce virtue and it is not any indication of goodness? This is true since none of us is judged for what he does not know and no one is called blessed because he has learning and knowledge. Instead, each person will be called to judgment in these two points - whether he have kept the faith and truly observed the commandments.

For this reason, there is no need to set much value on these things; nor for the sake of them to practice a life of discipline and labor. No, we should practice a life of discipline that, living well, we may please God. We also should not pray to know the future nor should we ask for it as the reward of our discipline; but our prayer should be that the Lord may be our fellow-helper for victory over the devil. Yet, if even once we have a desire to know the future then let us be pure in mind. Because I believe that if a soul is perfectly pure and in its natural state, it is able, being clear-sighted, to see more and further than the demons - for it has the Lord who reveals to it - like the soul of Elisha, which saw what was done by Gehazi, and beheld the hosts standing on its side.

When, therefore, they come to you during the night and attempt to tell you the future or say, "we are the angels," pay absolutely no attention to them, for they lie! Yes, even if they praise your discipline and call you blessed, do not listen to them and have no dealings with them. Instead, sign yourselves, your houses, and pray - then you shall see them vanish. For they are cowards and greatly fear the sign of the Lord's Cross since, truly, in it the Savior stripped them and made an example of them. Nevertheless, if after doing those things they shamelessly stand their ground, leaping about and changing their forms of appearance, do not fear them nor shrink from them nor pay any attention to them as though they were good spirits because the presence of either good or evil spirits, with the help of God, can easily be distinguished. The vision of the holy ones is not filled with and full of distraction: "For they will not strive, nor cry out, nor shall any one hear their voice." Instead, the vision of the holy ones comes

so quietly and gently that immediately joy, gladness, and courage arise in the soul. For the Lord, who is our joy, is with them and the power of God the Father and the thoughts of the soul remain calm, tranquil, and undisturbed so that the soul, enlightened as it were with rays, beholds by itself those who appear. The love of what is divine and of the things to come take possession of the soul and willingly it would be wholly joined with them if it could depart along with them. But if, being human, some fear the vision of the good, those who appear immediately take the fear away; as Gabriel did in the case of Zachariah and the angel did who appeared to the women at the holy tomb and as He did who said to the shepherds in the Gospel, "do not fear". For their fear arose not from timidity, but from the recognition of the presence of superior beings. This is the nature of the visions of the holy ones.

But the inroad and the display of the evil spirits is filled with and full of confusion: with din, with sounds, and with yelling and shouts such as the disturbance of a rough gang of thugs or group of outlaws would occasion upon their arrival somewhere. From such things arise fear in the heart, tumult and confusion of thought, dejection, hatred towards them who live a life of discipline, indifference, grief, remembrance of kinsfolk, fear of death, and, finally, desire for evil things, disregard of virtue and unsettled habits. Whenever, therefore, you have seen a vision and are afraid, if your fear is immediately taken away and in place of it comes unspeakable joy, cheerfulness, courage, renewed strength, calmness of thought and all those I named before: boldness and love toward God then take courage and pray! For joy and a settled state of soul show the holiness of him who is present. Thus Abraham, beholding the Lord, rejoiced; so did John, at the voice of Mary the God-bearer, leapt for gladness. But if, at the appearance of any spirit, there is confusion, repeated rapping sounds, worldly display, threats of death and the other things which I have already mentioned, know that it is an onslaught of evil spirits.

Let this also be an indication for you: whenever the soul remains fearful, there is a presence of our enemies. For the demons do not take away the fear of their presence as the great archangel Gabriel did for Mary and Zachariah, and as he did who appeared to the women at the tomb. Rather, whenever they see men afraid, they increase their delusions that men may become even more terrified

and at last attacking they mock them, saying, "fall down and worship!" This is how they deceived the Greeks and became to be considered gods (falsely called that, of course) by them. But the Lord did not allow us to be deceived by the devil for He rebuked him whenever he constructed such delusions against Him saying: "Get behind me, Satan. For it is written, you shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve". More and more, therefore, let the deceiver be despised by us - for what the Lord has said, for our sakes, he has done that the demons, hearing similar words from us, may be put to flight through the Lord who rebuked them in those words.

It is not proper, however, to brag about casting out demons nor to be exalted by the healing of diseases. It is also not fitting that the one who casts out devils should alone be highly esteemed while the one who does not cast them out should be considered as nothing. Instead, let a man learn the discipline of each ascetic and either imitate, rival, or correct it because the working of signs is not our doing but the Savior's work. This is why He said to His disciples: "Do not rejoice that the demons are subject to you but rejoice that your names are written in the heavens". The fact that our names are written in heaven is a proof of our virtuous life but to cast out demons is a favor of the Savior who granted it. For this reason, to those who boasted in signs but not in virtue, and said: "Lord, in your name did we not cast out demons and in your name did many mighty works?" He answered, "Truly I say to you - I do not know you" for the Lord does not know the ways of the wicked. That being said, however, we should always pray, as I said earlier, that we may receive the gift of discerning spirits; that, as it is written, we may not believe every spirit.

I would have preferred to stop speaking now and not to say anything else, satisfied with what I have said. But, in case you should think that I am simply speaking off the top of my head and believe that I tell you these things without any experience of them or that I am making all of this up, for this cause even though I should become as a fool, yet the Lord who hears knows the clearness of my conscience and that it is not for my own sake but because of your affection towards me and your request that I tell you again what I saw of the practices of evil spirits. How often they have called me blessed and I have cursed them in the name of the Lord! How often they have predicted the rising of the river and I answered them, "What have you

to do with it?" Once they came threatening and surrounded me like soldiers in full armor. At another time they filled the house with horses, wild beasts, and creeping things and I sang: "Some in chariots and some in horses but we will boast in the name of the Lord our God" and at the prayers they were turned to flight by the Lord. Once they came in darkness, bearing the appearance of a light and said, "We are come to give you a light, Anthony." But I closed my eyes and prayed and immediately the light of the wicked ones was quenched. A few months after this, they came as though singing psalms and babbling the words of Scripture but I, like a deaf man, did not listen to them. Once they shook the cell with an earthquake but I continued praying with unshaken heart. After this, they came again making noises, whistling, and dancing but as I prayed and lay singing psalms to myself they immediately began to lament and weep as if their strength had failed them. But I gave glory to the Lord who had brought down and made an example of their daring and madness.

Once, an exceedingly tall demon appeared with great splendor and magnificence and dared to say, "I am the power of God! I am Providence! What do you wish that I shall give you?" I spoke the name of Christ and continued to speak the name of Christ, the more I spoke Christ's name, it began to strike at him and immediately, big as he was, he and all of his demons disappeared at the name of Christ! Another time, while I was fasting, a demon came to me very deceptively, appearing as a monk with what seemed to be loaves of bread and counseled me saying, "Eat and cease from your many labors. You are also a man like me and are likely to become ill". But I, perceiving his trick, rose up to pray and he could not endure it for he departed and through the door there seemed to go out what appeared to be smoke. How often in the desert has he displayed what resembled gold so that I should just touch it and gaze upon it. Instead, I sang psalms against him and he vanished. Often they would beat me with lashes and I repeated over and over: "Nothing shall separate me from the love of Christ" (Romans 8:35). At this, instead of beating me they began beating each other. I did not stop them, however, or destroy their power - it was the Lord. He is the one who said, "I saw Satan, as lightning, fall from the heavens" (Luke 10:18). Nevertheless, I, children, aware of the Apostle's words (1 Corinthians 4:6), have taken all of these things upon myself so that

you might learn from my example neither to faint in your discipline nor to fear the devil or the delusions of the demons.

Since I have become a fool in detailing these things (2 Corinthians 12:11), receive them as an aid to help keep you safe and to help your courage. Believe me for I do not lie. Once some one knocked at the door of my cell and, when I answered it, I saw one who seemed very tall and of great stature. When I asked, "Who are you?" he said, "I am Satan." Then I said, "Why are you here?" He answered and said, "Why do the monks and all other Christians blame me undeservedly? Why do they curse me hourly?" I answered him, "Why do you trouble them?" He said, "I am not the one who troubles them. They trouble themselves, for I have become weak. Have they not read, 'The swords of the enemy have come to an end and you have destroyed the cities' (Psalm 9:6)? I no longer have a place, a weapon, or a city. The Christians are spread out everywhere and now even the desert is filled with monks! Let them pay attention to themselves - do not let them curse me undeservedly". Then I marveled at the grace of the Lord and said to him: "You who are always a liar and never speak the truth (John 8:44) - finally, however, even though against your will, you have spoken truthfully for the coming of Christ has made you weak and He has cast you down and stripped you of your power". But he, having heard the Savior's name and not being able to bear the burning from it, vanished.

If, therefore, the devil himself confesses that his power is gone then we should utterly despise both him and his demons! Since the enemy, along with his hounds, only has devices of this sort (deception, empty intimidation, trickery, false allurements, etc...) we, having got to know their weakness, are able to despise them. For this reason, let us not despond after this fashion, nor let us have a thought of cowardice in our heart, nor create fears for ourselves, saying: 'I am afraid that a demon should come and overthrow me. I fear that he should lift me up and cast me down or fear that, rising against me suddenly, he confounds me.' Let us not even entertain such thoughts nor let us be sorrowful as though we were perishing. Instead, let us be courageous and always rejoice believing that we are safe. Let us consider in our soul that the Lord, the one who put the evil spirits to flight and broke their power, is with us. Let us

consider and lay it to heart that while the Lord is with us, our foes can do us no harm. For when they come to us, they approach us in a way that corresponds with the state in which they discover us and adapt their delusions to the condition of mind in which they find us. If they find us timid and confused, they immediately overwhelm and overrun the place, like robbers, having found it unguarded. Whatever we are thinking within ourselves, they take advantage of that and increase it. For example, if they find us in a fearful, cowardly, and anxious state of mind, then, working with what is already there, they greatly increase our terror by their delusions and threats; and with these the unhappy soul is continually tormented. But if, on the other hand, they see us rejoicing in the Lord, contemplating the bliss of the future, mindful of the Lord, deeming all things in His hand and that no evil spirit has any strength against the Christian, nor any power at all over any one - when they behold the soul fortified with these thoughts - they are uncomfortable and turn back from attacking. Thus the enemy, seeing Job fenced around with thoughts like these, withdrew from him; but finding Judas unguarded, he took him captive. Thus, if we desire to despise the enemy, let us always contemplate the things of the Lord and let the soul always rejoice in hope. Then we shall see the snares of the demon are like smoke and the evil ones themselves flee rather than pursue because they are, as I have already said, exceedingly fearful, ever looking forward to the fire prepared for them.

As a sign of your fearlessness against them, do this: whenever there is any apparition, do not be paralyzed and immobilized by fear but, whatever it may be, first ask boldly: 'Who are you?' and 'Where do you come from?' If it should be a vision of holy ones, then they will assure you and change your fear into joy. But if the vision should be from the devil, immediately it becomes feeble, beholding your firm purpose of mind. For merely to ask, 'Who are you?' and 'where do you come from?' is proof of calmness. By asking these questions, the son of Nun learned who his helper was (Joshua 5:13) and the enemy did not escape the questioning of Daniel."

The growth of the monastic life during this time (around 305 AD).

While Anthony was speaking about these things everyone rejoiced. In some, the love of virtue increased. In others, carelessness was thrown aside and the self-conceit of others was

stopped. All were persuaded to despise the assaults of the evil one and marveled at the grace given to Anthony from the Lord for the discerning of spirits. Their cells were in the mountains, like filled with holy bands of men who sang psalms, loved reading, fasted, prayed, rejoiced in the hope of things to come, labored in alms-giving, and preserved love and harmony with one another. Truly it was possible, as it were, to behold a land set by itself, filled with piety and justice. For then there was neither the evil-doer nor the injured, nor the reproaches of the tax-gatherer but, instead, a multitude of ascetics - the one purpose of all of them was to aim at virtue. So that any one beholding the cells again, and seeing such good order among the monks, would lift up his voice and say, "How goodly are your dwellings, O Jacob, and your tents, O Israel; as shady valleys and as a garden by a river; as tents which the Lord has pitched and like cedars near waters".

Anthony, however, according to his custom, returned alone to his own cell, increased his discipline, and sighed daily as he thought of the dwelling places in Heaven, having his desire fixed on them, and pondering over the shortness of man's life. He used to eat and sleep, and go about all other bodily necessities with shame when he thought of the spiritual faculties of the soul. So often, when about to eat with any other hermits, recalling the spiritual food, he begged to be excused and departed far off from them considering it a matter of shame if he should be seen eating by others. When by himself, however, he did eat through bodily necessity. He would also often eat with the brothers though covered with shame on these occasions yet speaking boldly words of help. He used to say that it was right, fitting, and proper that a man to give all his time to his soul rather than his body yet to grant a short space to the body through its necessities; but all the more earnestly to give up the whole remainder of time to the soul and seek its profit, that it might not be dragged down by the pleasures of the body, but, on the contrary, the body might be in subjection to the soul. For this is that which was spoken by the Savior: "Do not be anxious for your life, what you shall eat nor for your body, what you shall wear. Seek not what you all shall eat or what you shall drink and do not be of a doubtful mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after but your Father knows that you have need of all these things. However, seek first His Kingdom, and all these things shall be added to you".

THE PERSECUTION IN ALEXANDRIA IN 311 AD

After this the Church was seized by the persecution which then took place under Maximinus. When the holy martyrs were led to Alexandria, Anthony also followed, leaving his cell and saying, "Let us go too that, if called, we may contend or see them that are contending". He strongly desired to suffer martyrdom but, not being willing to give himself up, he ministered to the confessors in the mines and in the prisons. He was very zealous in the judgment hall to stir up to readiness those who were summoned when in their contest, while those who were being martyred he received and brought on their way until they were perfected. The judge, therefore, seeing the fearlessness of Anthony and his companions and their zeal in this matter, commanded that no monk should appear in the judgment hall nor remain at all in the city. Therefore, all the other monks thought it best to hide themselves that day but Anthony paid so little attention to the command that he washed his garment and stood all the next day on a raised area in front of them and appeared in his best before the governor. Therefore, when everyone wondered at this and the governor passed by with his entourage and saw him, Anthony stood fearlessly, showing the readiness of us Christians. For, as I have already said, he prayed for himself to become a martyr and, for this reason, he seemed grieved that he had not borne his witness for Christ. The Lord, however, was keeping him for our profit and the profit of others, that he should become a teacher to many others of the discipline that he had learned from the Scriptures. Many, only beholding his manner of life, were eager to be imitators of his ways. So he again ministered as usual to the confessors and, as though he were their fellow captive, he labored in his ministry.

When the persecution finally ended and the blessed Bishop Peter had borne his testimony, Anthony departed and withdrew to his cell again and was there daily - a martyr to his conscience and contending in the conflicts of faith. His discipline became even more severe for he was always fasting and he had a garment with hair on the inside, while the outside was skin, which he kept until his end. He also neither bathed his body with water to free himself from filth, nor did he ever wash his feet nor even endure so much as to put them into water, unless compelled by necessity. Nor did any one even see

him unclothed nor his body naked at all, except after his death, when he was buried.

When he had retired and determined to fix a time that, after which, he would neither to leave his cell nor allow anyone to enter, Martinian, a military officer, came and disturbed Anthony for he had a daughter afflicted with an evil spirit. When he continued knocking at the door for a long time and asking him to come out and pray to God for his child, Anthony, not bearing to open, looked out from above and said, "Man, why do you call on me? I am also a man just as you. But if you believe on Christ whom I serve, go and according as you believe, pray to God, and it shall come to pass". Immediately he departed, believing and calling upon Christ and he received his daughter cleansed from the devil. Many other things the Lord, who says "Seek and it shall be given to you", also did through Anthony. For many of the sufferers, when he would not open his door, slept outside his cell and by their faith and sincere prayers were healed.

When Anthony saw himself inundated by many people and not allowed to withdraw himself according to his intent as he wished and fearing because of the signs which the Lord wrought by him that he should either become puffed-up or that some other should think of him above what he ought to think of him, he considered and set off to go into the upper Thebaid among those to whom he was unknown. Having received loaves from the brothers, he sat down by the bank of the river, looking whether a boat would go by, that, having embarked upon it, he might go up the river with them. While he was considering these things, a voice came to him from above saying, "Anthony, where are you going and why?" He was in no way disturbed by this, however, as he had been accustomed to be called often like this. Giving ear to it he answered saying, "Since the multitude do not permit me to be still, I wish to go into the upper Thebaid on account of the many hindrances that come upon me here and especially because they demand of me things beyond my power." But the voice said to him, "Even though you should go into the Thebaid or even though, as you have in mind, you should go down to the Bucolia, you will have to endure more, yes, double the amount of toil. If you really wish to be in quiet, depart now into the inner desert." When Anthony said, "Who will show me the way for I do not know it?" Immediately the voice pointed out to him Saracens about to go that way. Anthony

approached and drew near to them and asked that he might go with them into the desert. They, as though they had been commanded by Providence, received him willingly. Having journeyed with them three days and three nights, he came to a very high mountain and at the foot of the mountain ran a clear spring whose waters were sweet and very cold. Outside of the mountain, there was a plain and a few uncared-for palm trees.

Anthony then, as it were, moved by God, loved the place for this was the spot that he who had spoken with him earlier by the bank of the river had pointed out. Having first received loaves from his fellow travelers, he then lived in the mountain alone with no one else being with him. Recognizing it as his own home, he remained in that place for the rest of his life. The Saracens, having seen the earnestness of Anthony, purposely used to journey by that way and joyfully brought him loaves while, now and then, the palm trees also afforded him a poor and frugal enjoyment. After this, the brothers, learning of the place and like children mindful of their father, took care to send food to him. When, however, Anthony saw that the bread was the cause of trouble and hardships to some of them, to spare the monks of this, he resolved to ask some of those who came to him to bring him a spade, an axe, and a little corn. When these were brought, he went over the land looking around the mountain and, having found a small plot of suitable ground, tilled it and, having a plentiful supply of water for watering, he sowed the corn. Doing this year after year, he got his bread from this, rejoicing that he would be troublesome to no one and because he kept himself from being a burden to anyone. After this, seeing that people began coming to him again, he cultivated a few herbs so that he who came to him might have some slight solace after the labor of that hard journey. At first, however, the wild beasts in the desert, coming because of the water, often injured his seeds and plantings. But Anthony, gently laying hold of one of them, said to them all, "Why do you hurt me, when I hurt none of you? Depart, and in the name of the Lord do not come near this spot." From that time onward, as though fearful of his command, they did not come near the place anymore.

Thus, he was alone in the inner mountain, spending his time in prayer and discipline. The brothers who served him asked that they might come every month and bring him olives, lentils, and oil, for by

now he was an old man. There he passed his life and endured such great wrestlings “Not against flesh and blood”, as it is written, but against opposing demons, as we learned from those who visited him. For there they heard tumults, many voices, and, as it were, the clash of arms. At night, they saw the mountain become full of wild beasts and him also fighting, as if he were fighting against visible beings, and praying against them. Those who came to him he encouraged. While kneeling he contended and prayed to the Lord. Surely it was a marvelous thing that a man, alone in such a desert, feared neither the demons who rose up against him, nor the fierceness of the four-footed beasts and creeping things, for they were all so many. In truth, as it is written, “He trusted in the Lord as Mount Zion,” (Psalm 125:1) with a mind unshaken and undisturbed so that the demons rather fled from him and the wild beasts, as it is written, “kept peace with him.” (Job 5:23)

The devil, therefore, as David says in the Psalms, observed Anthony and gnashed his teeth against him. Anthony, however, was consoled by the Savior and continued unhurt by his tricks and varied devices. As he was watching in the night, the devil sent wild beasts against him and almost all the hyenas in that desert came forth from their dens and surrounded him. He was in the midst of them while each one threatened to bite him. Seeing that it was a trick of the enemy, he said to them all: “If you have received power against me, I am ready to be devoured by you but if you were sent against me by demons, do not stay but depart for I am a servant of Christ.” When Anthony said this they fled, driven by that word as with a whip.

A few days after, as he was working (for he was careful to work hard), someone stood at the door and pulled the braid which he was working on, for he used to weave baskets which he gave to those who came in return for what they brought him. Rising up, he saw a beast like a man to the thighs but having legs and feet like those of a donkey. Anthony only signed himself and said, “I am a servant of Christ. If you are sent against me, behold I am here.” But the beast, together with his evil spirits, fled so fast that, through his speed, he fell and died. The death of the beast was the fall of the demons for they strove in all manner of ways to lead Anthony from the desert and were not able.

Once, having been asked by the monks to come down and visit them and their abodes, after a time he journeyed with those who came to him. A camel carried the loaves and the water for them for all that desert is dry and there is no water at all that is fit to drink except in that mountain from where they drew the water and in which Anthony's cell was located. When they ran out of water while still on the journey, and since it was extremely hot, they all were in danger. For having gone around the neighborhood and finding no water, they could not walk any further but, laying on the ground and despairing of themselves, they let the camel go. But the old man, seeing that they were all in jeopardy and groaning in deep grief, departed a little way from them and, kneeling down, he stretched forth his hands and prayed. Immediately the Lord made water to spring forth where he had stood praying and so all drank and were revived. Having filled their bottles, they sought the camel and found her because the rope happened to have become caught in a stone and so was held fast. Having led it to the water for it to drink, they then placed the bottles on its back and finished their journey in safety. When he came to the outer cells all saluted him, looking on him as a father. And he too, as though bringing supplies from the mountain, entertained them with his words and gave them a share of help. Again there was joy in the mountains, zeal for improvement and consolation through their mutual faith. Anthony also rejoiced when he beheld the earnestness of the monks and his sister grown old in virginity and that she herself also was the leader of other virgins.

After so many days, he went back into the mountain again. From this time on, many resorted to him and others who were suffering ventured to go in. To all the monks who came to him, he continually gave this instruction: "Believe on the Lord and love Him. Keep yourselves from filthy thoughts and fleshly pleasures; as it is written in the Proverbs, do not be deceived by the fullness of the belly. Pray continually. Avoid vainglory. Sing psalms before sleep and upon waking. Hold in your heart the commandments of Scripture. Be mindful of the works of the saints that your souls, being put in remembrance of the commandments, may be brought into harmony with the zeal of the saints." He especially counseled them to meditate continually on the apostle's word, "Do not let the sun go down upon your wrath."(Ephesians 4:26) He considered that this was spoken of all the commandments in common, not just pertaining to

wrath alone; not on any sin of ours should we allow the sun to go down. For it is good and necessary that neither the sun should condemn us for an evil committed during the day nor the moon for a sin by night, or even for an evil thought. That this state may be preserved in us, it is good to hear the apostle and keep his words for, he says, "Try your own selves and prove your own selves." (2 Corinthians 13:5) Daily, therefore, let each one take from himself an account of his actions both by day and night and, if he has sinned, let him cease from it. If he has not, let him not be boastful. But let him abide in that which is good, without being negligent, nor condemning his neighbors, nor justifying himself, "until the Lord come who searches out hidden things," (1 Corinthians 4:5) as the blessed apostle Paul says. For often, unaware, we do things that we know not of but the Lord sees all things. For this reason, committing the judgment to Him, let us have sympathy with one another. Let us bear each other's burdens but let us examine our own selves and hurry to fill up that in which we are lacking. As a protective measure to keep you safe from sin, do this: let each one of us write down our actions and the impulses of our soul as if we were going to share them with each other. It is certain that if we would be completely ashamed to have them known, we will abstain from sin and not harbor any evil thoughts in our mind; for who wants to be seen while sinning? Who, instead, would prefer rather to lie after committing a sin, desiring to escape notice? Just as we would not commit carnal sin while others are around who could see us, in the same way, if we write down our thoughts as though we were about to make them public to our other brothers, it will be easier to keep ourselves free from evil thoughts due to the shame we would incur if they were to become known. For this reason, let that which is written be for us the eyes of our fellow hermits that, blushing as much to write it down the same as if we had been exposed publicly, we may never even think of what is inappropriate. Behaving like this, we will be able to keep the body in subjection, please the Lord, and trample on the strategies of the enemy.

This was the advice he gave to those who came to him; with those who suffered, he sympathized and prayed. Often the Lord heard him on behalf of many yet he did not boast because he was heard nor did he complain if he were not. Instead, he always gave thanks to the Lord and asked the sufferer to be patient and to know

that healing belonged neither to him nor to man at all, but only to the Lord who does good when and to whom He will. The sufferers used to receive the words of the old man as though they were a cure, learning not to be downhearted but rather to patiently endure suffering and difficulty. Those who were healed were taught not to give thanks to Anthony but to God alone.

For this reason, Fronto, a man who was an officer of the Court and had a terrible disease (for he used to bite his own tongue and was in danger of injuring his eyes), came to the mountain and asked Anthony to pray for him but Anthony said to him, "Depart and you will be healed." But when his disease seized him and he remained some days, Anthony waited and said to him, "If you stay here, you cannot be healed. Go now. Upon entering into Egypt, you shall see the sign wrought in you." Fronto believed and went. As soon as he set his eyes on Egypt his sufferings ceased and the man became whole according to the word of Anthony which the Savior had revealed to him in prayer.

There was also a young woman from Busiris, Tripolitana who had a terrible and very hideous disorder; for the discharge from her eyes, nose, and ears fell to the ground and immediately became worms. She also was paralyzed and squinted. Her parents, having heard of monks going to Anthony and believing on the Lord who healed the woman with the issue of blood, asked to be allowed, together with their daughter, to make the trip with them to Anthony. When they allowed them, the parents with their daughter, remained outside the mountain with Paphnutius, the confessor and monk; but the monks went in to Anthony. When they only wished to tell him about the young woman, he anticipated it and detailed both the sufferings of the child and how she journeyed with them. When they asked that she be allowed come to Anthony, he did not allow it but said, "Go. If she is not dead, you will find her healed, for the accomplishment of this is not mine, that she should come to me, wretched man that I am, but her healing is the work of the Savior, who in every place shows His pity to them that call upon Him. For this reason, the Lord has inclined to her as she prayed and His loving-kindness has declared to me that He will heal the child where she is right now." The wonder took place - going out they found the parents rejoicing and the girl whole.

When two brothers were coming to him, their water ran out during the journey and one died and the other was at the point of death because he had no strength to go on but laid down upon the ground expecting to die also. But Anthony, sitting in the mountain, called two monks who happened to be there at that time and urged them saying, "Take a pitcher of water and run on the road towards Egypt because, of the two men who were coming, one is already dead and the other will die unless you hurry. For this has been revealed to me as I was praying." The monks went and found one lying dead, whom they buried, and the other they restored with water and led him to the old man for it was a day's journey. If any one asks, however, why he did not speak before the other died, the question should not to be asked. For the punishment of death was not Anthony's but God's - who also judged the one and revealed the condition of the other. But the marvel here was only in the case of Anthony: that he sitting in the mountain had his heart watchful, and had the Lord to show him things afar off.

This is so, for once again he was sitting on the mountain and, looking up, saw in the air some one being borne upwards and there was much joy among those who met him. Then, wondering about what he just saw and considering a company of that kind to be blessed, he prayed to learn what this might be. Immediately a voice came to him: "This is the soul of Amun, the monk at Nitria." Now Amun had persevered in the discipline up to old age and the distance from Nitria to the mountain where Anthony was, was a journey of thirteen days. The companions of Anthony, seeing the old man amazed, asked to learn what it was and heard that Amun had just died. Amun was well known because he had stayed there very often and many signs had been wrought by his means. This is one of them: once when he needed to cross the river called Lycus (it was the season of when the river floods over), and he asked his friend Theodorus to remain at a distance so that they would not see each other naked as they swam the across the water. When Theodorus had departed, Amun felt ashamed even to see himself naked. While he was pondering on this and being filled with shame, suddenly he was borne over to the other side. Theodorus, himself a good man, approached and, seeing Amun across first without a drop of water falling from him, enquired how he had gotten over. When he saw that Amun was unwilling to tell him, he held him by the feet and declared

that he would not let him go before he had learned from him how he had gotten over without getting wet. So Amun, seeing the determination of Theodorus especially from what he had said and having asked him to tell no man before his death, told him that he had been carried and placed on the other side. Amun told him that he had not even set foot on the water, nor was that possible for man, but for the Lord alone and those whom He permits, as He did for the great apostle Peter. Theodorus told this after the death of Amun. The monks to whom Anthony spoke concerning Amun's death noted the day he told them and, when the brothers came up from Nitria thirty days later, they asked them and learned that Amun had fallen asleep on that day and hour in which the old man had seen his soul borne upwards. Both these and the other monks marveled at the purity of Anthony's soul; how he had immediately learned that which was taking place at a distance of thirteen days' journey and had seen the soul as it was taken up.

Archelaus, the Count, found Anthony in the outer mountain one time and asked him merely to pray for Polycratia of Laodicea, an excellent and Christian young woman, because she suffered terribly in the stomach and side through too much discipline and was altogether frail and weak. Anthony prayed therefore and the Count noted the day in which the prayer was made and, having departed to Laodicea, he found the young woman whole. Having enquired when and on what day she was relieved of her infirmity, he produced the paper on which he had written the time of the prayer and having read it he immediately showed the writing on the paper. Everyone wondered when they knew that the Lord had relieved her of pain at the time when Anthony was praying and invoking the goodness of the Savior on her behalf.

Concerning those who came to him, he often foretold some days or sometimes a month beforehand why they were coming. Some came only for the sake of seeing him, others through sickness, and others were suffering from evil spirits. All considered that the labor of the journey was neither too much trouble nor loss because each one returned aware that he had received some benefit. Even though he would say such things and see such sights, he used to ask that no one should wonder at him for this but should rather marvel at

the Lord for having granted to us men to know Him as far as our powers extended.

Afterwards, on another occasion, having descended to the outer cells, he was asked to enter a boat and pray with the monks and he alone perceived an exceedingly unpleasant smell. But those on board said that the stench arose from the fish and salt meat in the ship. He replied, however, that the smell was different and while he was speaking a youth with an evil spirit, who had come and hidden himself in the ship, cried out. But the demon being rebuked in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ departed from him, and the man became whole. All knew that the evil smell arose from the demon.

Another person, a person of rank, came to him possessed by a demon. The demon was so terrible that the man possessed did not know that he was coming to Anthony. He even ate the excrement from his body. Those who brought him asked Anthony to pray for him and Anthony, pitying the young man, prayed and kept watch with him all night. About dawn, the young man suddenly attacked Anthony and pushed him. When those who came with him became angry at his behavior, Anthony said, "Do not be angry with the young man for it is not him but the demon which is in him. Being rebuked and commanded to go into dry places, the demon became raging mad. Thus, the demon has done this. For this reason, give thanks to the Lord for his attack on me is a sign of the departure of the evil spirit." When Anthony had said this, immediately the young man became whole. Having come at last to his right mind, he knew where he was and greeted the old man and gave thanks to God.

Many monks have related with the greatest agreement and unanimity that many other similar things like these were done by him. Still, these do not seem as marvelous as certain other things appear to be. Once, when about to eat, having risen up to pray about the ninth hour (3pm), he perceived that he was caught up in the spirit, and, wonderful to tell, he stood and saw himself, as it were, from outside of himself and that he was led in the air by certain ones. Next, certain hostile and terrible beings stood in the air and desired to hinder Anthony from passing through. When his conductors opposed them, they demanded whether or not Anthony was accountable to them. When they desired to sum up the account from his birth,

Anthony's conductors stopped them, saying, "The Lord has wiped out the sins from his birth but from the time he became a monk and devoted himself to God, it is permitted you to make a reckoning." Then when they accused him but could not convict him, he was free to continue on his way unhindered. Immediately he saw himself, as it were, coming and standing by himself, and again he was Anthony as before. Then, forgetting about eating, he remained the rest of the day and through the whole night groaning and praying because he was astonished when he saw what mighty opponents our wrestling is against and by what labors we have to pass through the air. He remembered that this is what the Apostle said, "according to the prince of the power of the air"; for in it the enemy has power to fight and to attempt to hinder those who pass through. For this reason Anthony most earnestly exhorted, "Take up the whole armor of God that you all may be able to withstand in the evil day" that the enemy "having no evil thing to say against us, may be ashamed." We who have learned this, let us be mindful of the Apostle when he says, "whether in the body I know not, or whether out of the body I know not; God knows." Paul was caught up unto the third heaven and, having heard things unspeakable, he came down; while Anthony saw that he had come to the air, and contended until he was free.

He also had this favor granted to him. As he was sitting alone on the mountain, if he was ever perplexed in his meditations, this was revealed to him by providence in prayer. The happy man, as it is written, was taught by God. After this, when he had a discussion with certain men who had come to him asking about the state of the soul and of what nature its place will be after this life, one from above called out to him the next night saying, "Anthony, arise. Go out and look." Having gone outside (for he knew whom he ought to obey) and looking up, he saw one standing who reached to the clouds: tall, hideous, and fearful. He also saw others who were ascending as though they were winged. The figure stretched out his hands and stopped some of those who were ascending while others flew above him and, having escaped into the sky, were carried up, free from care. At the ones escaping, the giant gnashed his teeth but the figure rejoiced over those who fell back. Immediately a voice came to Anthony, "Do you understand you what you see?" His understanding was opened and he understood that it was the passing of souls and that the tall being who stood was the enemy who envies the faithful.

Those whom he caught and stopped from passing through are accountable to him while those whom he was unable to hold as they passed upwards had not been obedient to him. Having seen this and, as it were, being reminded of this, he struggled more and more each day to advance towards those things which were before. Anthony was not willing to tell people about these visions but, as he spent much time in prayer and was amazed when those who were with him pressed him with questions and forced him, he was compelled to speak just as a father who cannot withhold what is beneficial from his children. He thought that, as his conscience was clear, the account would be beneficial for them and that they might learn that discipline bore good fruit and that visions were often the consolation of their labors.

In addition to this, he was tolerant in nature and humble in spirit – because, even though he was such a man as he was, he still observed the rule of the Church most rigidly and was willing that all the clergy should be honored more than himself; he was not ashamed to bow his head to bishops and presbyters. If a deacon ever came to him for help, he talked with him on what was profitable but gave place to him in prayer. Not being ashamed to learn himself, he would often ask questions and desired to listen to those who were present - if any one said anything that was useful, he readily confessed that he benefited from it. Besides all this, his face had a great and wonderful grace - this gift also came from the Savior. If he were present in a great company of monks and any one who did not previously know him wished to see him, he would quickly move through the crowd and pass by the rest hurrying to Anthony - as though attracted by his appearance. Anthony, however, did not stand out from the others because of his height or size but it was the serenity of his manner and the purity of his soul. Since his soul was free from disturbances, his outward appearance was calm also - so from the joy of his soul he possessed a cheerful countenance and from his bodily movements could be perceived the condition of his soul, as it is written, 'When the heart is merry the countenance is cheerful, but when it is sorrowful it is cast down'. That is how Jacob recognized what Laban was thinking in his heart and said to his wives, 'The countenance of your father is not as it was yesterday and the day before'. This is also how Samuel recognized David for he had joyful eyes and teeth white as milk. This is also how Anthony

was recognized for he was never disturbed since his soul was at peace; he was never downcast because his mind was joyous.

Anthony was altogether wonderful in faith and religious - he never held communion with the Meletian schismatics, knowing their wickedness and apostasy from the beginning. He also did not engage in conversations with the Manichaeans or any other heretics as one would with a friend. If he did talk with them, it was only as far as giving advice so that they should change to devoutness; for he thought and asserted that association with these was harmful and destructive to the soul. In the same way, he also detested the heresy of the Arians and exhorted all neither to approach them nor to hold their erroneous belief. Once, when certain Arian madmen came to him, when he had questioned them and learned their impiety, he drove them from the mountain, saying that their words were worse than the poison of serpents.

Once also, when the Arians falsely asserted to others that Anthony's opinions were the same as theirs, he was displeased and extremely angry against them when he heard what they were claiming. Then, summoned by the bishops and all the brothers, he descended from the mountain and went to Alexandria where he denounced the Arians saying that their heresy was the last of all and a forerunner of Antichrist. Anthony taught the people "that the Son of God was not a created being neither had He come into being from non-existence but that He was the Eternal Word and Wisdom of the Essence of the Father. Because this is the case, it was wicked to say, 'there was a time when He did not exist' for the Word was always co-existent with the Father. For this reason, have no fellowship with the most irreverent Arians - for there is no communion between light and darkness. You are good Christians, but they, when they say that the Son of the Father, the Word of God, is a created being, do not differ in any way from the ungodly since they worship that which has been created rather than the creator - God. Believe me when I tell you that creation itself is angry with them because they number The Creator, the Lord of all by whom all things came into existence, with those things that were created".

All the people rejoiced on hearing the anti-Christian heresy anathematized by a man of such stature as Anthony. All the people

in the city ran together to see Anthony; and the Greeks and those who are called their Priests, came into the church, saying, "We ask to see the man of God", for this is what they called him because in that place also the Lord exorcised many of demons and healed those who were mad. Many Greeks asked that they might even just touch the old man, believing that they would profit from this alone. Confidently I tell you this: as many became Christians in those few days as one would have seen made in a whole year! Then, when some thought that he was troubled by the crowds of people and therefore turned them all away from him, he calmly stated that the demons with whom he wrestled in the mountains were more numerous than the crowds that came to see him.

But as we were sending on him forth on his way and he was departing, when we arrived at the city gate a woman from behind cried out, "Stay, man of God! My daughter is grievously vexed by a devil! Stay, I beg of you, lest I too harm myself with running". The old man, when he heard her and was asked by us to help, willingly stayed. When the woman drew close to her daughter, she was cast on the ground but when Anthony had prayed and called upon the name of Christ, the child was raised whole, for the unclean spirit was gone. The mother blessed God and all gave thanks and Anthony also rejoiced, departing to the mountain as though it were to his own home.

Anthony was also exceedingly wise. The amazing thing was that, although he had not received a formal education, he was an intelligent and perceptive man. Two Greek philosophers once came to him thinking they could try their skill on Anthony. He was staying in the outer mountain and recognized who they were from their appearance; he came to them and said to them by means of an interpreter, "Why, philosophers, did you trouble yourselves so much to come to a foolish man such as I?". When they said that he was not a foolish man but exceedingly prudent, he said to them, "If you came to a foolish man, your labor has been wasted. However, if you think that I am prudent then become as I am for we should imitate what is good. If I had come to you, I should have imitated you; but since you came to me become as I am, for I am a Christian". They departed with wonder from Anthony for they saw that even demons feared him.

Again, others such as these met him in the outer mountain and thought to make fun of him because he had no education. Anthony said to them, "Tell me - what do you all think? Which came first – the mind or knowledge? Also, which is the cause of which – does the mind create knowledge or does knowledge create the mind?" When they answered that the mind is first and the creator of knowledge, Anthony then said, "Whoever, therefore, has a sound mind has not need of education". This answer amazed both the bystanders and the philosophers and they departed marveling that they had seen so much understanding in an uneducated man; because his manners were not rough as though he had been raised in the mountain and there grown old, but graceful and polite, and his speech was seasoned with the divine salt, so that no one was envious but rather everyone who visited him rejoiced over him.

After this other men came who were considered wise among the Greeks and they asked him a reason for our faith in Christ. But when they attempted to argue concerning the preaching of the divine Cross and meant to mock, Anthony stopped for a little and, first pitying their ignorance, said, through an interpreter who could skillfully interpret his words, "Which is more beautiful: to confess the Cross or to attribute to those whom you call gods adultery and the seduction of boys? For that which is chosen by us is a sign of courage and a sure token of the contempt of death, while yours are the passions of uncontrolled lusts and desires. Next, which is better to say: that the Word of God was not changed but, remaining the same, He took a human body for the salvation and well-being of man and that, having shared in human birth, He might make man partake in the divine and spiritual nature or to liken the divine to senseless animals and consequently to worship four-footed beasts, creeping things and the likenesses of men? For these things, wise men, are the objects of your reverence. How do you dare mock us who say that Christ has appeared as a man, seeing that you, bringing the soul from heaven, assert that it has strayed and fallen from the vault of the sky into the body? I wish that you had said that it had fallen only into the human body alone and not asserted that it passes and changes into four-footed beasts and creeping things. Our faith declares that the coming of Christ was for the salvation of men. You are in error because you speak of the soul as not generated. We, however, considering the power and loving-kindness of Providence, think that the coming of

Christ in the flesh was not impossible with God. But you, although calling the soul the likeness of Mind, connect it with falls and invent in your myths that it is changeable and consequently introduce the idea that Mind itself is changeable by reason of the soul. For whatever is the nature of a likeness, such necessarily is the nature of that of which it is a likeness. But whenever you think such a thought concerning Mind, remember that you blaspheme even the Father of Mind Himself.

Now concerning the Cross - which would you say is better? To bear it when a plot is brought about by wicked men and not to be in fear of death brought about under any form whatever or to talk on and on about the wanderings of Osiris and Isis, the plots of Typhon, the flight of Cronos and his eating his children and the slaughter of his father? For this is your wisdom. Nevertheless, how, if you mock the Cross, do you not marvel at the resurrection? For the same men who told us of the latter wrote about the former also. When you make mention of the Cross are you silent about the dead who were raised, the blind who received their sight, the paralytics who were healed, the lepers who were cleansed, the walking upon the sea, and the rest of the signs and wonders, which show that Christ is no longer a man but God? To me, you seem to do yourselves much injustice and not to have carefully read our Scriptures. But read and see that the deeds of Christ prove Him to be God who came to the earth for the salvation of men.

Nevertheless, please, tell us your religious beliefs. What can you say of senseless creatures except senselessness and ferocity? If, as I hear, you wish to say that these things are spoken of you as legends and that you allegorize the rape of the maiden Persephone of the earth; the lameness of Hephaestus of fire. You allegorize the air as Hera, the sun as Apollo, the moon as Artemis, and the sea as Poseidon; none the less, you do not worship God Himself, but serve the creature rather than God who created all things. Even if it is because creation is beautiful that you composed such legends, still it was proper that you should stop short at admiration and not make gods of the things created; so that you should not give the honor of the Creator to that which is created. Since, if you do, it is time for you to divert the honor of the master builder to the house built by him and of the general to the soldier. What then can you reply to these things,

that we may know whether the Cross has anything worthy of mockery?”

When, however, they were at a loss to give an answer and turning here and there trying to come up with something, Anthony smiled and said through an interpreter, “Sight itself carries the conviction of these things. But as you prefer to lean upon arguments based on proof and wish us not to worship God until after such proof is obtained - you tell us first how things in general and specially the recognition of God are accurately known. Is it through logical, proof-providing argument or the working of faith? Tell me - which is better: faith which comes through the in-working (of God) or through logical argumentation?” When they answered that faith which comes through the in-working was better and was accurate knowledge, Anthony said, “You have answered well for faith arises from the disposition of soul but dialectic from the skill of its inventors. For this reason, to those who have the in-working through faith, demonstrative argument is needless, or even superfluous because what we know through faith is exactly what you attempt to prove through words and often you are not even able to express what we understand. Therefore, the in-working through faith is better and stronger than your professional arguments.”

“We Christians therefore hold the mystery not in the wisdom of Greek arguments but in the power of faith richly supplied to us by God through Jesus Christ. To show that this statement is true, look at this: without having received formal education, we believe in God - knowing through His works His providence over all things and to show that our faith is effective, we are now supported by faith in Christ but you by professional philosophical debate. The portents of the idols among you are being done away with but our faith is extending everywhere. You, by your arguments and quibbles, have converted none from Christianity to Paganism. We, teaching the faith on Christ, expose your superstition since all recognize that Christ is God and the Son of God. You, by your eloquence, do not hinder the teaching of Christ but we, by the mention of Christ crucified, put all demons to flight (whom you fear as if they were gods). Wherever the sign of the Cross is, magic is weak and witchcraft has no strength.”

“Tell us - where are your oracles now? Where are the charms of the Egyptians? Where are the delusions of the magicians? When did all these things cease and grow weak except when the Cross of Christ arose? Is the cross really a fit subject for mockery? Rather, aren't the things brought to nothing by it and convicted of weakness that are fit for mockery? For this is a marvelous thing, that your religion was never persecuted but even was honored by men in every city, while the followers of Christ are persecuted and still our side flourishes and multiplies over yours. What is yours, though praised and honored, perishes while the faith and teaching of Christ, though mocked by you and often persecuted by kings, has filled the world. For when has the knowledge of God so shone forth? When has self-control and the excellence of virginity appeared as now? When has death been so despised except when the Cross of Christ appeared – no one doubts this when he sees the martyr despising death for the sake of Christ or when he sees the virgins of the Church keeping themselves pure and undefiled for the sake of Christ.”

“And these signs are sufficient to prove that the faith of Christ alone is the true religion. But look at this, you still do not believe and are seeking for proof from rational arguments! We, however, make our proof ‘not in the persuasive words of Greek wisdom’ as our teacher has stated it but we persuade by the faith that noticeably precedes argumentative proof. Look at this - there are some here that are tormented with demons” - there were certain ones who had come to him very disturbed by demons and, bringing them into their midst, he continued saying, - “Do you cleanse them either by your arguments or by whatever art or magic you choose, calling upon your idols? If you are unable, then put away your contention with us and you shall see the power of the Cross of Christ!” Having said this, he called upon Christ and signed the sufferers two or three times with the sign of the Cross and immediately the men stood up whole and in their right minds and immediately gave thanks to the Lord. The philosophers, as they are called, wondered and were greatly astonished at the understanding of the man and at the sign that had been brought about. Anthony, however, said to them, “Why do you marvel at this? We are not the ones who do these things! It is Christ who does them by means of those who believe on Him. Therefore, believe for yourselves also and you shall see that with us there is no trick of words but faith displayed through love which is wrought in us

towards Christ; which if you yourselves should obtain, you will no longer seek demonstrative arguments but will consider faith in Christ sufficient". These are the words of Anthony. Then they, amazed at this also, saluted him and departed - confessing the benefit they had received from him.

The fame of Anthony went even to kings - for Constantine Augustus and his sons Constantius and Constans the Augusti wrote letters to him, as to a father, and begged an answer from him. Anthony, however, did not make much of the letters nor did he rejoice at the messages but was the same as he had been before the Emperors wrote to him. When they brought him the letters he called the monks and said, "Do not be astonished if an emperor writes to us, for he is a man; but rather wonder that God wrote the Law for men and has spoken to us through His own Son." Thus, he was unwilling to receive the letters saying that he did not know how to write an answer to such things. Being urged by the monks, however, because the emperors were Christians and in case they should take offense believing that they had been spurned, he consented that they should be read and he wrote an answer approving them because they worshipped Christ. Giving them counsel on things pertaining to salvation Anthony told them not to think much of the present but, rather, to remember the judgment that is coming and to know that Christ alone was the true and Eternal King. He begged them to be merciful and to pay attention to justice and the poor. They, having received the answer, rejoiced. Thus, he was dear to all and all desired to consider him as a father.

Being known to be so great a man, therefore, and having thus given answers to those who visited him, he returned to the inner mountain and maintained his accustomed discipline. Often when people came to him, as he was sitting or walking, as it is written in Daniel, he became quiet and still and, after a period, he resumed the thread of what he had been saying before to the brothers who were with him. His companions perceived that he was seeing a vision for often when he was on the mountains he saw what was happening in Egypt and told it to Serapion the bishop, who was indoors with him, and who saw that Anthony was wrapped in a vision. Once, as he was sitting and working, he fell, as it were, into a trance, and groaned much at what he saw. Then after a time, having turned to the

bystanders with groans and trembling, he prayed and, falling on his knees, remained like this for a long time. Upon arising, the old man wept. Upon seeing this, his companions, trembling and terrified, desired to learn from him what it was. They bothered him so much to tell them until he was forced to speak. With many groans he spoke as follows: "O, my children, it would be better to die before what has appeared to me in the vision comes to pass." When they asked him again what it was that he saw, Anthony burst into tears and said, "Wrath is about to seize the Church and it is on the point of being given over to men who are like senseless beasts. I saw the table of the Lord's House and mules standing around it on all sides in a ring, kicking the things inside the ring just like a herd kicks when it leaps in confusion. You saw", said he, "how I groaned, for I heard a voice saying, 'My altar shall be defiled'." These are the things the old man saw and after two years the present inroad of the Arians and the plunder of the churches took place - when they violently carried off the vessels and made the unbelievers carry them. When they forced the unbelievers from the prisons to join in their services and in their presence did upon the Table as they would. Then we all understood that these kicks of the mules signified to Anthony what the Arians, senselessly like beasts, are now doing. When he saw this vision, he comforted those with him, saying, "Do not be downcast, my children. For just as the Lord has been angry, so again will He heal us and the Church shall soon again receive her own order and shall shine forth as she is accustomed. You shall see the persecuted restored and wickedness again withdrawn to its own hiding place and pious faith speaking boldly in every place with all freedom. Only do not defile yourselves with the Arians for their teaching is not that of the Apostles but that of demons and their father the devil. Yes, rather, it is barren and senseless and without light or understanding, like the senselessness of these mules."

Such are the words of Anthony. We should not doubt whether such marvels were wrought by the hand of a man, for it is the promise of the Savior, when He says, "If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you all shall say to this mountain, remove from here and it shall remove and nothing shall be impossible unto you". Again, "Truly, truly, I say to you: if you all shall ask the father in My name He will give it you. Ask and you shall receive". It is He, himself, who says to

His disciples and to all who believe on Him, "Heal the sick, cast out demons; freely you all have received, freely give".

At any rate, Anthony did not heal by commanding but by prayer and speaking the name of Christ. He did this so that it was clear to all that it was not he who worked but the Lord who showed mercy by his means and healed the sufferers. Anthony's part was only prayer and discipline, for the sake of which he stayed in the mountain, rejoicing in the contemplation of divine things but grieving when troubled by multitudes of people and dragged to the outer mountain. All the judges used to ask him to come down because it was impossible for them to enter the inner mountain because of their following of litigants. Nevertheless, they asked him to come that they might but see him. When he avoided it and refused to go to them, they remained firm however and sent to him all the prisoners under the guard of soldiers hoping that, on account of these, he might come down. Thus, being forced by necessity and seeing them lamenting, he came into the outer mountain and again his labor was profitable because his coming was advantageous and serviceable to many since he profited the judges, counseling them to prefer justice to all things, to fear God, and to know that 'with what judgment they judged, they should be judged'. Anthony, however, loved more than all things his time in the mountain.

At another time, suffering the same compulsion at the hands of those who had need and after many entreaties from the commander of the soldiers, he came down and spoke to them briefly of the things that make for salvation and addressed the concerns of those who wanted him and was preparing to depart. But when the duke, as he is called, entreated him to stay, he replied that he could not linger among them and persuaded him by a wonderful comparison saying, "Fish, if they remain on dry land too long, die. In the same way, monks lose their strength if they loiter among you and spend their time with you. For this reason, as fish must hurry to the sea, so must we hasten to the mountain for fear that, perhaps, if we delay we forget the things within us". The general, having heard this and many other things from him, was amazed and said, "Truly this man is the servant of God because, unless he were beloved of God, where could an ignorant man have gained such great understanding?"

A certain general, Balacius by name, persecuted us Christians very severely due to his regard for the Arians - that name of ill-omen. His ruthlessness was so great that he would beat virgins and strip and scourge monks. At this time, Anthony wrote a letter as follows and sent it to him: "I see wrath coming upon you. Because this is so, cease to persecute the Christians, for fear of the wrath that is coming for even now it is at the point of coming upon you". Balacius, however, laughed and threw the letter on the ground and spit on it and insulted the bearers, bidding them tell this to Anthony: "Since you take thought for the monks, soon I will come after you too". Five days had not passed before wrath came upon him - Balacius and Nestorius, the Prefect of Egypt, went forth to the first halting place from Alexandria, which is called Chaereu, and both were on horseback. The horses belonged to Balacius and were the quietest of all the horses in his stable. But they had not gone far towards the place when the horses began to playfully leap about with one another as they are accustomed to do and, suddenly, the quieter one on which Nestorius sat dismounted Balacius with a bite and attacked him and tore his thigh so badly with its teeth that he was taken straight back to the city and in three days died. Everyone was amazed because what Anthony had foretold had been fulfilled so quickly.

Thus, by this, he warned the cruel. He instructed the rest who came to him in such a way that they immediately forgot their lawsuits and felicitated those who were in retirement from the world. He also defended those who were done wrong in such a way that you would imagine that he, and not those who were wronged, was the sufferer. Further, he was able to be of such use to all, that many soldiers and men who had great possessions laid aside the burdens of life and became monks for the rest of their days. It was as if God had given a physician to Egypt - for who, when in grief, met Anthony and did not return rejoicing? Who came to him mourning for his dead and did not immediately put off his sorrow? Who came in anger and was not converted to friendship? What poor and low-spirited man met him who, hearing him and looking upon him, did not despise wealth and console himself in his poverty? What monk, having being neglectful, came to him and became did not become stronger in his commitment? What young man, having come to the mountain and seen Anthony, did not immediately deny himself pleasure and love self-control? Who, when tempted by a demon, came to him and did

not find rest? Who came troubled with doubts and did not get quietness of mind?

For this was the wonderful thing in Anthony's discipline, that, as I said before, having the gift of discerning spirits, he recognized their movements and was not ignorant where any one of them turned his energy and made his attack. Not only was he not deceived by them himself, but cheering up those who were troubled with doubts, he taught them how to defeat their plans telling them about the weakness and craft of those who possessed them. Thus each one, as though prepared by him for battle, came down from the mountain, braving the plans and strategies of the devil and his demons. How many young women who had suitors, having only seen Anthony from afar, remained virgins for Christ's sake! People also came from foreign parts to him and, like all others, having received some benefit, returned to their homes as though set in the right direction by a father. Certainly when he died everyone, as having been deprived of a father, consoled themselves solely by their remembrances of him and preserving at the same time his counsel and advice.

It is worthwhile that I should relate, and that you, as you wish to, should hear what his death was like for his ending is worthy of imitation. According to his custom, he visited the monks in the outer mountain and, having learned from Providence that his own end was at hand, he said to the brothers, "This is my last visit to you which I shall make - I shall be surprised if we see each other again in this life. Soon the time of my departure is at hand because I am almost near a hundred and five years old". When they heard it they wept, embraced, and kissed the old man. He, however, as though sailing from a foreign city to his own, spoke joyously and exhorted them "Not to grow idle in their labors, nor to become faint in their training, but to live as though dying daily". And as he had said before, "zealously to guard the soul from foul thoughts, eagerly to imitate the Saints and to have nothing to do with the Meletian schismatics, for you know their wicked and profane character. Nor have any fellowship with the Arians, for their impiety is clear to all. Nor be disturbed if you see the judges protect them, for it shall cease, and their pomp is mortal and of short duration. For this reason, keep yourselves all the more untainted by them and observe the traditions of the fathers and chiefly the holy faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, which you have learned

from the Scripture and of which you have often been put in mind by me.”

When the brothers were urging him to stay and to die with them he did not allow it for many reasons, as he showed by keeping silent. His main reason, however, was this: the Egyptians are accustomed to honor their dead with funeral rites. At death, they would wrap the bodies of good men in linen cloths (this was especially true of the holy martyrs) and would not bury them underground but place them on couches and keep them in their houses. They thought that this was a proper way in which to honor the departed but Anthony often urged the bishops to give a commandment to the people on this matter. Similarly, he taught the laity and reproved the women saying that, “this thing was neither lawful nor holy at all. For the bodies of the patriarchs and prophets are even to this day preserved in tombs and the very body of the Lord was laid in a tomb, and a stone was laid upon it, and hid it until He rose on the third day”. By saying this, he showed that whoever did not bury the bodies of the dead after death transgressed the law even though they were sacred. For what is greater or more sacred than the body of the Lord? Many who heard him, from then on, buried the dead underground and gave thanks to the Lord that they had been instructed correctly.

Anthony, however, knowing the custom and fearing that his body would be treated in this way, hurried away - having bidden farewell to the monks in the outer mountain, he entered the inner mountain where he was accustomed to abide. After a few months, he became sick. Having summoned those who were there - there were two in number who had remained in the mountain fifteen years, practicing the discipline and attending on Anthony on account of his age - he said to them, “I, as it is written, go the way of the fathers for I perceive that I am called by the Lord. Be watchful and do not destroy your long discipline but, as though now making a beginning, zealously preserve your determination. For you all know the treachery of the demons, how fierce they are and yet how little power they have. Therefore, do not fear them but rather always breathe Christ and trust Him. Live as though dying daily. Pay attention to yourselves and remember the admonition you have heard from me. Have no fellowship with the schismatics nor any dealings at all with the heretical Arians - for you know how I shunned them because of

their hostility to Christ and the strange doctrines of their heresy. Therefore, be even more earnest to always be followers first of God and then of the Saints so that after death they may also receive you as well-known friends into the eternal habitations. Ponder over these things and think of them. If you have any care for me and are mindful of me as of a father, do not allow anyone to take my body into Egypt, fearing that, perhaps, they place me in the houses - to avoid this is why I entered into the mountain and came here to die. You know how I always reprimanded those who had this custom and exhorted them to cease from it. Therefore, Bury my body and hide it underground yourselves and let my words be observed by you that no one may know the place but you alone; for at the resurrection of the dead I shall receive it incorruptible from the Savior. Divide my garments. To Athanasius the bishop give one sheepskin and the garment where upon I am laid, which he himself gave me new but which has grown old with me. To Serapion the bishop give the other sheepskin and keep the hair garment yourselves. For the rest: fare well – all of you, my children, for Anthony is departing and will no longer be with you”.

Having said this, they kissed him and he lifted up his feet and, as though he saw friends coming to him and was glad because of them (for as he lay his countenance appeared joyful), he died and was gathered to the fathers. Afterwards, they, according to his commandment, wrapped him up and buried him - hiding his body underground. No one knows to this day where it was buried except those two only. Each one of those who received the sheepskin of the blessed Anthony and the garment worn by him guards it as a precious treasure; for even to look on them is as it were to see Anthony again and he who is clothed in them seems to bear his admonitions with joy.

This is the end of Anthony's life in the body and the above was the beginning of the discipline. Even if this account is small compared with Anthony's merit still, from this, reflect how great Anthony, the man of God, was. Who from his youth to so great an age preserved a uniform zeal for the discipline. Neither through old age was he subdued by the desire of expensive food nor through the infirmity of his body changed the fashion of his clothing nor washed even his feet with water and yet remained entirely free from harm.

His eyes were undimmed and quite sound and he saw clearly, he had not lost one of his teeth but they had become worn to the gums through the great age of the old man. He remained strong both in hands and feet and, while other men were using various foods and washings and several garments, he appeared more cheerful and of greater strength than them. Also, the fact that his fame has been proclaimed everywhere and that all regard him with wonder and that those who have never seen him long for him, is clear proof of his virtue and God's love of his soul. For not from writings nor from worldly wisdom nor through any things such as these was Anthony renowned but solely from his devoutness towards God. That this was the gift of God no one will deny. For from where into Spain and into Gaul, how into Rome and Africa, was the man heard of who abode hidden in a mountain unless it was God who makes His own known everywhere, who also promised this to Anthony at the beginning? For even if they work secretly, even if they wish to remain in obscurity, yet the Lord shows them as lamps to lighten all, that those who hear may thus know that the instructions of God are able to make men prosper and thus be zealous in the path of virtue.

Read these words, therefore, to the rest of the brothers so that they may learn what the life of monks should be and may believe that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ glorifies those who glorify Him and leads those who serve Him to the end. Not only to the kingdom of heaven, but here also, in this life - even though they hide themselves and are desirous of withdrawing from the world – and makes them illustrious and well known everywhere on account of their virtue and the help they give to others. If need be, read this among the unbelievers, that even in this way they may learn that our Lord Jesus Christ is not only God and the Son of God but also that the Christians who truly serve Him and religiously believe on Him, prove, not only that the demons, whom the Greeks themselves think to be gods, are no gods, but also tread them under foot and put them to flight as deceivers and corrupters of mankind, through Jesus Christ our Lord - to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.