



For the Catholic Church, God's Revelation is found in Sacred Tradition, understood as God's Revealed Word handed down by the Living Teaching Authority established by Christ in the Church. That includes both Written Tradition (Scripture) and Unwritten Tradition received from Christ and handed down Orally by the Apostles and their Successors. The Church founded by Christ on Peter, and only that Church, has been Empowered by Christ to 'Interpret' His Teaching Authoritatively in His Name.

Scripture is *Inspired*; *Inspiration* really means that God Himself is the Chief Author of the Scriptures. He uses a Human Agent, in so marvelous a way that the Human writes what the Holy Spirit wants him to write, does so without Error, yet the Human Writer is Free, and keeps his own Style of Language. It is only because God is *Transcendent that He can do this - insure Freedom from Error, while leaving the Human Free. To say He is Transcendent means that He is above and beyond all our Human Classifications and Categories.*

John was writing his eye-witness account of Jesus some thirty years later than the other three accounts, possibly around 95AD. There had been time for growth, reflection and observation. Many thousands of Christians had by then lost their lives for their faith in the Lord Jesus, both in Rome and in Jerusalem. John himself had been in prison and was now in exile, the last of Jesus' twelve apostles to remain alive.

Considered one of the most important Catholic theologians and Bible commentators, Cornelius à Lapide's, S.J. writings on the Bible, created a Scripture Commentary so complete and scholarly that it was practically the universal commentary in use by Catholics for over 400 years. Fr. Lapide's most excellent commentaries have been widely known for successfully combining piety and practicality. Written during the time of the Counter Reformation, it includes plenty of apologetics. His vast knowledge is only equaled by his piety and holiness.

### **Continuation of John 4: 23-54**

Ver. 23.—*But the hour cometh*, &c. Now is the time of the New Law of My Gospel, in which the true worshippers, namely, Christians, whether Jews, or Samaritans, or of other nations, being converted unto Me, shall worship God, not in this mountain, nor Jerusalem only, by the carnal sacrifices of beasts, as the Jews and Samaritans do, but in all places throughout the world in spirit and in truth.

*In spirit and truth.* Observe, the Samaritans ignorantly and falsely worshipped God. But the Jews worshipped the true God indeed, but chiefly by corporeal victims, and other bodily symbols, and in one stated place, Jerusalem: all which things were shadows and types of the spiritual worship which was to be inaugurated by Christ. To both these Christ opposes His faithful Christians, who instead of the body, worship God in spirit; and in truth instead of in falsity, shadows and ignorance. For God is an incorporeal Spirit, most true, and most pure. Spirit therefore here signifies the spiritual worship of faith, hope, and charity, devotion, contrition, and other virtues, by which God is most rightly worshipped by Christians, and not through shadows and

Ver. 51.—*As he was going*, &c. “His servants met him,” says Cyril, “telling of the swiftness and power of the words of Christ, the Lord so ordering that by the sequence of events the faith of the ruler might be confirmed.”

Ver. 52.—*He asked therefore*, &c. “He studies to be informed concerning the hour,” says Cyril, “to see if it coincides with the time when the Saviour’s favour was bestowed upon him.”

*Yesterday, at the seventh hour*: this was an hour after noon, when, the child being healed, the servants had immediately set out to tell the glad news to the father. But they could not reach him on the same day. They travelled therefore the rest of that day, and all through the night, and came to him the next morning, for, as we have said, Capharnaum was fourteen leagues or hours distant from Cana.

Ver. 53.—*The father therefore knew*. “From hence we may understand,” says Bede (in *Catena*), “that there are degrees of faith, as well as of other virtues. There is the beginning, the increase, and the perfection of faith. This man’s faith had its beginning when he asked for his son’s safety: its increase when he believed the word of the Lord saying, *Thy son liveth*: it was perfected by the announcement of his servants.” Moreover, because this nobleman dwelt at Capharnaum, as well as the centurion, we need not doubt that they were friends; and that the centurion through this miracle, which was prior in point of time, conceived so great faith in Christ that he said, “Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof, but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed” (Matt. viii. 8).

Tropologically, listen to Theophylact, “The little king (*regulus*) is every man, not only because, according to the soul, he is nigh to the King of all, but because he has assumed dominion over all things. The son is a mind fevered with depraved pleasures and desires. The going down of Christ is His merciful condescension. Christ saith, *Go thy way, i.e.*, show continual progress in good things: then thy son shall live. Otherwise he will die, if thou cease to walk (aright)”

Finally, he was healed at the seventh hour, 1. because as Origen says, seven is the symbol of the Sabbath, and of rest, in which is health. 2. Because the same number is the symbol of the seven-fold Holy Spirit, in Whom is all salvation.

Ver. 54.—*This is again*, &c. The word *again* must be joined with *when He was come*. Meaning, this was the second miracle which Christ wrought in Cana of Galilee, when again—that is, a second time—He was come thither out of Judea. For the first miracle was the conversion of water into wine, which Christ did, when He came the first time out of Judea into Galilee. He came, therefore, twice out of Judea into Galilee, and illustrated each of His comings by a new miracle. “It is called *the second*,” says Euthymius, not “because after the first He had done no other miracle in the whole of Palestine (for He had already done many in Judea), but because, after the first, this was (only) the second which He had done in Cana.” John says this, indicating that an abundance of miracles were performed subsequently by Christ in Galilee, which Matthew relates (iv. 23, &c.), and which after this are related by S. John.

seems to have been a Jew, not a Gentile, as both S. Jerome and Origen think. We may think so, because he had little faith, and for that reason was reproved by Christ; whereas the Gentiles were prompt to believe, and so were praised by Him, as was the case with the centurion, and the woman of Canaan.

Some, as Irenæus, think that this nobleman was the same person as the centurion mentioned in Matthew viii. But they were different persons. For the centurion, when Christ was willing to go to him, asked him to remain where he was. But this nobleman asks Christ to come to his sick son. The former came to Christ as He was descending from the mountain to Capharnaum. The nobleman comes to Jesus as He is going into Cana. The boy of the former was sick with palsy; this one's child was ill with a fever. Christ was all but present when He healed the former: this He healed being absent. The one was a servant, the other a son. So S. Chrysostom, Theophylact, and others.

Ver. 47.—*When he had heard*, &c. The nobleman having heard the fame of Christ, that He healed all sick persons whatsoever, proceeded from Capharnaum to Cana, to ask Jesus, who was staying there, to come back with him to Capharnaum, to heal his son. This was a journey of fourteen hours, or leagues, and therefore long and difficult. Wherefore he had little faith in Jesus, says S. Gregory, since he did not think He could save unless He were corporeally present.

Ver. 48.—*Jesus therefore*, &c. *Signs and prodigies* mean nearly the same thing. *Signs*, however, are properly what take place in natural things, and by nature, slowly operating, but which Christ wrought in a moment, and therefore miraculously. Such are the healing of the sick. But *prodigies* are things which surpass the whole power of nature, as the raising of the dead.

Christ reproved the small faith of the nobleman, in order that He might sharpen and augment it. As though He said, "Thou and thine hast heard of certain signs and prodigies which I have wrought; still thou believest not that I am the Messiah, unless I do very many more, and that thou thyself mayest behold them with thine eyes." "He teaches," says S. Chrysostom, "that it is not His miracles that we are to attend to, but His doctrine. He shows that signs are especially made gracious to the soul; and in this case He heals the father who was labouring under a disease of the mind, no less than the (bodily) disease of the son." Indeed, He first cures the unbelief, or the imperfection of faith, in the father, and then the fever of the son.

Ver. 49.—*The ruler saith*, &c. *My child*, Greek, *παιδιον μου*, *i.e.*, *my little son*, meaning, *my most beloved, my only delight*. "The ruler," says S. Chrysostom, "being distressed by his son's affliction, did not pay much attention then to the words of Jesus, but was wholly taken up with the cure. See how he grovels on the earth—*Come down, ere my child die*—as if Jesus could not raise the dead, or knew not that he had a son."

Ver. 50.—*Jesus saith*, &c. "This one word," saith Rupert, "was a true declaration concerning things present, and a command of life." For this word of Christ was not only declaratory, but effectual: for it produced that which it declared, namely, the life and healing of the sick. So in the Eucharist, the words, *This is My Body*, enunciate in such manner that the Body of Christ is there, that they cause It to be there present. Moreover, Christ went to the servant of the centurion: He was not willing to go to the son of the ruler, because there was in the centurion confirmed faith, but in the ruler faith was imperfect.

*He believed the word which Jesus spake*. "The Saviour cured two persons," says Cyril, "by the same words. He brought the mind of the ruler to believe, and He delivered the youth from bodily disease."

figures, but *in truth*. *In truth* therefore is in the true, sincere, and worthy worship of God, in which God is well pleased, according to the words (Ps. 1. 18), "In holocausts Thou shalt not be delighted: the sacrifice for God is a broken spirit" (Vulg.). Also (Ps. xlix. 23), "The sacrifice of praise shall honour Me" (Vulg.). And (Ps. iv. 6), "Sacrifice the sacrifice of justice, and trust in the Lord."

As Theophylact says, "Because many seem to worship in soul, but have not right knowledge, such as heretics, therefore He added, *and in truth*. For it behoves us both to worship God with the mind, and also to have a sound faith with regard to Him. Such a worshipper was Paul, as Origen says, when he declares, "God is my witness, whom I serve':

### (Greek, *ὡ λατρεύω*, *i.e.*, *worship with latria*)

in my spirit (Rom. 1. 9)." And the Gloss says, not in the Temple, not in the mountain, but in the innermost temple of the heart, and with a true knowledge must God be worshipped. The Samaritan therefore worshipped God in a mountain, or locally, the Jew in a shadow, or figuratively, the Christian *in spirit and in truth*, truly and spiritually. For, as S. Chrysostom says, "The former things were figures, now all is truth."

Others explain thus, we must worship God *in spirit, i.e.*, by the Spirit, or the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

"Mystically, *by the spirit* is intended," says Theophylact, "action: *by truth*, contemplation." For all Christians serve God either by an active, or a contemplative life.

Heretics object, since God should be worshipped by Christians *in spirit and in truth*, therefore all corporal rites and ceremonies ought to be rejected in baptism.

I answer by denying the consequence. For these are not shadows and figures of the Old Law, but ornaments, incentives, and effects of the Spirit, and therefore pertain to the Spirit. For without sacraments and sacrifices the Church cannot exist, because without them she would cease to be visible, and could not be united and gathered together. In form these ceremonies are practised by Christians, and flow from the inward spirit of faith, hope, and charity. Therefore they belong to the Spirit, as results depend upon a cause, and external upon interior actions. It was otherwise with the ignorant and carnal Jews, who placed all their worship in external sacrifices and rites. So SS. Cyril and Ambrose, (*De Sp. Sc. l 3. c. 12*).

Even the heathen saw that God, to be worshipped acceptably, must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

“If God be Mind, as ancient verses tell,  
Who worship Him in spirit, worship well.”

*God is a Spirit, &c.* This is the reason *a priori*: God is a most pure and true Spirit, therefore He is pleased only with worship in spirit and in truth. “If God were a body,” says S. Augustine, “it would be fitting to worship Him in a mountain, because a mountain is material. Hence it is plain against the Anthropomorphites, and against Tertullian and Lactantius, that God has not a body, even the least material conceivable, but that He is a most immaterial Spirit.” That axiom therefore of Tertullian is false, “that what is incorporeal is non-existent.” However, Tertullian and Lactantius seem to use the words *body* and *corporeal* in an improper sense, merely to denote an actual substance.

Listen to S. Augustine expounding these words of Christ (*lib. De Spec. c. 1*). “God is a Spirit incomprehensible, incorporeal, immutable, that cannot be bounded by space, everywhere whole, nowhere divided: everywhere present, ineffably penetrating all things, containing all things, knowing all things, beholding all things; Almighty, governing all things: wholly in heaven, wholly in earth, wholly everywhere. Always working, always resting, gathering, but needing not, carrying all things without being burdened, filling all things, but not included in them, creating and protecting, nourishing and perfecting all things. Thou seekest, but Thou never wantest anything. Loving, but not inflamed. Thou art jealous, but untroubled. Thou repentest without grieving. Thou art angry, and tranquil all the while. Thou changest Thy works, but Thy counsel knows no alteration. Thou holdest all things, fillest all things, embracest all things, art above all things, sustainest all things. Nor dost Thou in one part sustain, and in another super-exceed: nor in one part dost Thou fill, and in another include. In sustaining Thou super-exceedest, and in super-exceeding Thou sustainest. Thou teachest the hearts of the faithful without the service of words, ‘reaching from one end to another mightily, and sweetly disposing all things.’”

What is God? Listen to Arnobius invoking Him (*lib. 1, Cont. Gent.*). “O greatest and highest Creator of things invisible. Thou art invisible, and art never comprehended by any other natures. Worthy, indeed worthy art Thou, if only Thou mayest be called worthy by mortal lips, after whom all intelligent nature aspires, and to whom it never ceases to give thanks: to whom every living thing ought continually to bend the knee, and supplicate with unceasing prayers. For Thou art the First Cause: the locality and space of things: the foundation of whatsoever is infinite, unborn, immortal, eternal, the Only One, whom no corporeal form outlines, no circumscription bounds, without quality or size, without situation, motion, or hold: concerning whom nothing can be said or expressed by mortal words: and that Thou mayest be understood, we must be silent, and that as in a shadow a fallible look may seek after Thee, nothing whatsoever must be muttered.”

Ver. 25.—*The woman saith, &c. Cometh, Greek, ἔρχεται*, present tense, *is come*, who will presently solve all things that are doubtful to us in religion, and will teach us where, when, and how God is to be worshipped. The woman knew this by common speech and report. For already the sceptre had been transferred from Judah to

“Lest,” as S. Chrysostom says, “they should be troubled as about to undergo the greatest burden, when they were sent to preach. They must think that the Prophets had had yet harder labour, even as sowing the seed is harder labour, and needs greater anxiety than reaping. As the Gloss says, “Unless the Jews had been prepared by the Prophets, they would not have listened to the Apostles.”

Ver. 39.—*Of that city many believed, &c* They were moved because she confessed before her fellow-citizens that she had lived in fornication with a man not her husband, as Christ had told her, that by means of her own shame she might make known the honour and glory of Christ, the true Prophet and Messiah.

Ver. 40.—*He abode there two days*: not longer, lest, if He abode longer among Samaritans, the Jews should calumniate Him, as not being the Messiah, who was promised to the Jews, rather than to the Samaritans.

Ver. 42.—*And said to the woman, &c. Saviour of the world*, understand *Messiah*, as the Syriac Version adds, who was sent by God for the salvation not of Israel only, as the Jews pretended, but of all the nations of the whole world. Of the world I say, lost by sin. Deservedly does S. Chrysostom in this place admire the, as it were, sudden faith of the Samaritans, when the Jews were so dilatory and hard to believe in Christ.

Ver. 43.—*After two days, &c.* That is, He went into other cities and villages of Galilee, leaving out Nazareth, His own city, as S. Matthew says (iv. 13).

Ver. 44.—*For Jesus, &c.* The word *for* expresses the reason why Jesus left Nazareth, His own city, and went into the other parts of Galilee, because the Nazarenes despised Him as their fellow-citizen, and the son of an artizan.

Ver. 45.—*When therefore He was come, &c. All the miracles*, especially that He alone had cast out all the buyers and sellers from the Temple, as well as the many other signs that He had shown.

Observe: The Jews, after the many miracles of Christ which they saw, did not believe in His preaching, nor even receive Him. The Galileans, who also saw many miracles, received Him kindly but did not believe in Him. But the Samaritans, although they saw no miracles, received Him, and believed Him to be the Messiah, sent by God for the salvation of the whole world. So those who are without, often receive what those of the household disdain and despise.

Ver. 46.—*A certain nobleman*. The Latin translator seems to have had in his Greek copies *βασιλικος*, i.e., *regulus*, a little king. The present reading is *βασιλικος*, i.e., *royal*, understand *counsellor*, or *public minister*, of Herod Antipas; a prefect, or intimate friend of his. The Syriac has, a royal servant: S. Chrysostom says, “because he was of the royal race, or discharged some princely function.” Nonnus says, “he was a courtier, who was over the army.” Origen says, “he was perhaps of the family of Tiberius Cæsar, employed by him in some office of Judea.”

*Capharnaum*: it is probable that this nobleman’s son lay ill at Capharnaum, because it was his father’s usual place of abode. And his father, hearing that Jesus, who healed so many sick, was come out of Judea into Cana of Galilee, went thither, to ask of Jesus the healing of his son; as is plain from what follows. The nobleman

S. Augustine and others take the words as they stand, literally. Wherefore these words should be seen to have been spoken by Christ in the month of January, after the eight months in which He had preached in Judea. For in four months from January or in May, the crops are ripe, and the harvest comes. Wherefore at Pentecost, which fell in May, they offered to God the loaves of the first fruits of the new harvest. “Ye,” says S. Augustine, “are counting four months unto harvest. I show you another harvest, white and prepared already.” So He says, *Lift up your eyes, and look unto the fields that they are white already unto the harvest.* The white fields He calls the city of Sichem, and the places round about, which, stirred up by the woman, bring hearers in troops to Christ. As though He had said, Ye see these fields, filled not with wheat, but with a multitude of people flocking to Me, who are prepared to receive My doctrine, and to be admitted into My Church. Labour then strenuously with Me, O My Apostles, to reap the harvest. The wheat harvest may be four months distant yet: but the harvest of souls is nigh, yea ready, amongst these Samaritans. It is fitting then that you and I should reap them, and gather them into the garner of God.” Theophylact says, “Lift up both your bodily and your spiritual eyes, and see the multitude of the Samaritans. See their minds eager to believe, which, like fields that are ripe for salvation, have need of reapers.”

Ver. 36.—*And he that reapeth,* &c. Christ invites the Apostles to labour with Him in gathering in this harvest, by the hope of an eternal reward. As though He said, “He that reaps wheat receives wages, but only brief and temporal: but he that reaps with Me this spiritual harvest of souls gathers it unto life eternal. For this harvest the reaper gains both for himself and for his crop, that is, for the souls whom he converts, for he leads them to heaven as it were in triumph.” “The fruit of this terrestrial harvest,” says S. Chrysostom, “does not arrive at eternal life, but that spiritual harvest always accompanies us.” Christ calls Moses and the Prophets *sowers*, who with great labour delivered the seeds of faith to the Jews, *i.e.*, such first principles as that God is One, and that the Messiah would come for the salvation of the world. The *reapers* are Christ and His Apostles, who, by the teaching of the Gospel, perfected these first principles of the Prophets, and by the faith and grace of Christ sanctified both Jews and Samaritans, and brought them to eternal life. Wherefore this conversion of the Samaritans brought joy, not only to Christ and the Apostles, but to Moses and the Prophets, because their seed had not proved unfruitful, but had been brought by Christ to an abundant harvest. As S. Augustine says, “If the Prophets had not been sowers, whence had it come to that woman to say, *I know that Messiah cometh?* That woman was already ripe fruit.” And again, “They had different labours in time, but they shall have an equal fruition of joy, when they together receive the wages of everlasting life.” It is often very different in the natural harvest, where the reaper rejoices, but the sower sorrows.

Ver. 37.—*For in this,* &c. A word, *i.e.*, a proverb, which is “current in the mouths of many,” says S. Chrysostom. This proverb, *one soweth,* &c., which is spoken of the natural harvest, is still more true with regard to the spiritual sowers and reapers. “The sowers were the Prophets, the reapers are you, O ye Apostles, who by My doctrine will bring to perfection the seeds of faith which were sown by the Prophets, and will gather them, when ripe, into the storehouse of the Church.” Wherefore He subjoins an explanation.

Ver. 38.—*I have sent,* &c. *I have sent, i.e.*, I have desired and determined to send. An inchoate and destined, not a completed, action is signified. The Prophets, and teachers of the Law, and such as they, with great toil taught the uninstructed minds of the Jews the rudiments of the knowledge of God, and prepared them for the Christian harvest of righteousness and holiness. You, O ye Apostles, *have entered into their labours*, because ye shall convert the minds of the Jews prepared to receive Me.

Moreover Christ said this, that by the example of the Prophets, who sowed so laboriously, He might animate the Apostles to preach the gospel, which was more easy, and involved less toil.

Herod, and Daniel’s seventy weeks were fulfilled, so that all men knew that the time for the Advent of Messiah was close at hand. The Jews thought that John the Baptist was Messiah: but he himself attested that Jesus was Messiah. Wherefore through this assertion of the Baptist the report was widely diffused that Messiah had come.

*Who is called Christ.* These are not the words of the woman, who spake only in the Hebrew or Syrian language, but of the Evangelist interpreting the Hebrew word *Messiah*, by *Christ, the Anointed One.*

Ver. 26.—*Jesus saith,* &c. “I am the Messias, or the Christ. Have faith in Me: receive My doctrine and my law, that thou mayest be saved and blessed.” Christ both spoke this with the outward voice, but still more with an inward voice, illuminating the woman’s mind, and kindling her will, to love and reverence Him. Whereon the woman believed straightway, and moved her whole city to believe in Him.

Ver. 27.—*And immediately,* &c. Origen, S. Cyril, and others, think it is meant that the disciples marvelled at the humility of Christ that He should condescend to talk, with a poor and foreign woman.— But if so, the Evangelist would have written, *that He should talk with such a woman.* Wherefore S. Cyprian (*Tract. de Sing. Clericorum*) and others better explain thus;—that Christ was not accustomed to talk with women alone, and with this end in view, that He might give an example of chastity and prudence to all the faithful, but especially to clerics, priests, preachers, and religious. For rightly says the wise man, “A moth proceedeth from a garment, and so doth the iniquity of man from the woman” (Ecclus. xlii. 13) Hence Eliseus and all the saints most carefully avoided converse with women. It was their common opinion that women can be approached with but little profit, and with great peril, either to the woman or the man—peril of chastity, or at the least, of reputation.

You will say—Are then women to be neglected? I answer, By no means: but let them be taught in public preaching, or catechising. If they are sick, or there be any other reason why the priest should come to them, let it be in an open place, acting as Christ here did: and let a witness be present, as S. Charles Borromeo took care should always be in his own case.

Ver. 28.—*She left,* &c. “Having heard Him say,” saith S. Augustine, “*‘I am He that talketh with thee,’* and having received the Lord Christ into her heart, what could she do but leave her pitcher, and run to preach the Gospel?” For she knew that Jesus must be a Prophet because He had revealed to her the secrets of her heart. When therefore He declared that He was Messias, she believed in Him, knowing that He was a man worthy of credit, who could neither deceive, nor be deceived. Wherefore she ran into the city without delay, fearing lest Jesus might go away if she tarried. As S. Chrysostom says, “She had come to draw water, but as soon as she found

the true Fountain she despised the other; and by the grace which came down upon her from above, she discharges the office of an Apostle.”

For this is the Spirit of Christ, to infuse into those whom He converts zeal for converting others, that they may make others partakers of that great benefit which they feel in themselves. Elegantly and piously does S. Ambrose write of this (*Serm.* 30): “By a new kind of marvel, the woman, who came to the well of Samaria a harlot, went away chaste from the fountain of Christ. And she who came to fetch water carried back modesty. For as soon as the Lord showed her sins, she knew and confessed them: she announced Christ to be the Saviour. And leaving her water-pot at the well, she does not carry a pitcher back to the city, but she brings grace. She seems to return without a load, but she goes back full of sanctity. She returned full, I say, because she came a sinner, she returns a preacher. And she who had left her water-pot carried back the fullness of Christ. She brought back no harm to her city, for though, it is true, she carried no water to it, she brought them the whole well of salvation.”

Ver. 29.—*Come and see*, &c. Saith Cyril, “Giving an account of the miracle, she prepared her hearers to believe:” because although, as S. Chrysostom says, she had not heard the whole history of her life from Christ, from what she did hear she believed (He knew) the rest.

*Is not this the Christ?* “She speaks as though hesitating, that they might give their opinion,” said Euthymius. For she herself had no doubt, but firmly believed Jesus to be the Messiah. As S. Chrysostom says, “Observe the immense wisdom of this woman: she neither affirms nor denies that He is the Christ. She did not wish that she should be the author of their believing in Him. She wished them to be persuaded by hearing Him for themselves, which persuasion would be far more likely to happen in that way. For without doubt she understood that if they once tasted of that Fountain, they would have the same opinion about it that she had.” This Samaritan woman then, by the conversation and grace of Christ, from a sinner became a penitent and a saint, yea a preacher of Christ like Mary Magdalen.

Her proper name was Photina, who is reckoned among the Saints in the Roman Martyrology on the 20th of March, in the words following: “On the same day Saint Photina, the Samaritan woman, her sons, Joseph and Victor: also Sebastian, a general, Anatolius, Photius, &c., brothers, who all confessed Christ and obtained martyrdom.” On which Baronius says, “The Greek Menology assigns this day for her commemoration.” Her head is religiously preserved at Rome, in the basilica of S. Paul, where I have seen it amongst other relics of the saints.

Ver. 30.—*They went out*, &c. And from what they saw of the wisdom and holiness of His words and manners, they believed in Him as the Messiah, as is plain from verse 42. “The hardness of the Jews,” says Cyril, “is reproved by the readiness to believe of the Samaritans.” For the Samaritans were converted by one conversation of Christ, but the Jews after three years of His preaching, and after all the many miracles which He had wrought, would not believe.

Ver. 31.—*In the meanwhile*, &c. “This,” says S. Chrysostom, “they did out of love and zeal for their Master, seeing Him wearied with the heat and the journey.” At the same time they were thinking about themselves. Hungry and tired as they were, they wished to eat, but did not venture to do so until Christ should commence, and bless the meal, as was His wont. “Jesus was accustomed,” says Theophylact, “to accept the gift of food when offered, though He giveth food to all flesh. This He did, that they who presented it might gain merit, and that no one might be ashamed to be poor, nor think it hard to be fed by others.” For it is fitting that Teachers should have other persons to provide food for them, that they themselves having no other cares may be careful only about the ministry of the word.

Ver. 32.—*But He said*, &c. “I am hungering for the conversion of the Samaritans, which I am procuring through the woman. So that spiritual hunger diminishes and keeps down, if it does not take away, all hunger for bodily food: meanwhile you who are tired and famished, eat as much as you please.” “More obscurely He intimates,” says S. Cyril, “that if the disciples knew of the conversion of the Samaritans, which was then going on, they would be thinking of that food, rather than be taking thought for corporal food. For since they were to be the future Teachers of the world, He teaches them by His own example that they ought to have far more care for the salvation of men than for their own bodies.”

Ver. 33.—*Then said His disciples*, &c. The Apostles did not understand that Christ was speaking of spiritual food. Wherefore S. Augustine says, “What wonder was it that if the woman did not understand about the water? behold, the disciples do not understand the food.”

Ver. 34.—*Jesus saith*, &c. Christ here tells the work of preaching, and man’s redemption, His, that is, His own special and sweetest food, because by it, as by the greatest dainties, He was fed and delighted. So Euthymius says, “The will of the Father, who had sent Him, and His work enjoined upon Christ, is the salvation of men, according to the words, *I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do.*” Tropologically, let Christians, and specially preachers, learn from Christ that their spiritual food ought to be obedience and zeal for souls. 1. Because both sustain the life of the soul. 2. Because both, like food, cause the powers of the mind to become strong. 3. Because as food causes a child to grow up to be a perfect man, so do these two virtues make us to grow to a virile state of spiritual strength.

Ver. 35.—*Say not ye*, &c. From the metaphor of food He passes to the allegorical harvest, from which are food and bread.

*Say not ye?* That is, ye are wont often to say. From this it would appear that the Apostles, as they passed through the corn fields of the Schemites, talked among themselves about the coming harvest, as men are wont to do. From hence Christ took occasion to speak about the spiritual harvest, *i.e.*, the conversion of the Samaritans. As though He had said, “The care of the natural harvest interests you: but the care of the spiritual harvest ought to concern you far more, that you should help Me in converting the Samaritans.”

*Yet four months.* Maldonatus thinks this was a proverb, meaning that there was time enough for thinking about any matter—as the natural harvest, for instance: but that it could not be used of the spiritual harvest; for that indeed was already ripe for being reaped by Christ and the Apostles. For Maldonatus thinks this was spoken by Christ about the end of March, when the harvest is not far off.