

In the preceding article we professed the remission of sins, which is as it were the resurrection of the soul; in this we profess the resurrection of the body, saying, I believe in the resurrection of the body.

We say the resurrection of the body, rather than the resurrection of man; because, strictly speaking, the body alone is recalled to life, whilst the soul, being immortal, only unites itself to its body from which it was separated by death. The meaning of this article is that all men, the just and the wicked, will rise again in their bodies.

How will this be accomplished? And what will be the qualities of the risen bodies?

1. The resurrection will be effected by the power of God, to whom it will be no more difficult to reproduce our bodies from their ashes than it was in the first instance to create them. At the end of the world, after the general conflagration, when all men will be dead, and the surface of the earth will have been purified by the fire, Jesus Christ, says the Gospel, shall send His angels with a trumpet, and a great voice: which means that the angels will be sent to proclaim in loud voice the commands of Jesus Christ. Their voice will resound as a high-sounding trumpet, from one extremity of creation to the other, proclaiming these words or others of similar importance: Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment. At this divine command all the souls, those in heaven, those in purgatory, those in hell, will hasten to take again their bodies. All men will rise with the same body, as regards its substance, which they had on earth, and that body will have all that belongs to the integrity of its nature. Thus, children as well as adults, those who are infirm or deprived of some member as well as those who have preserved their bodies sound and whole, will all rise in a perfect state. The work of the resurrection will be, as was the work of the creation, in all its particulars worthy of God. Even the wicked will rise perfect as regards the members of their bodies.

2. As regards the qualities of the risen bodies, they will very much differ in the elect and the damned. The dead, rising in different and widely separated parts of the earth, will at once gather together, the just and the sinners, in one confused assembly. Without delay, however, the angels, ministers of the Supreme Judge, will separate them, and reassemble them in the place determined by God for the judgment.

Ask yourselves sincerely, in that last separation of the good and the bad, to which of the two shall I be consigned? Is it not for me now to decide it? If I wish to be numbered with the good in the future life, I must sever myself from the wicked in this life.