Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, because your reward is very great in Heaven. Words taken out of the 5th Chap. of St. Matt and 12th V.

What subject of joy D’ [Dear] Christians, for all the Servants of God, and Disciples of Jesus Christ, to know that there is an ineffable and incomprehensible happiness destined for them to possess for all eternity. Unto this end all the designs of the Lord, and all the operations of his power, wisdom and goodness are directed. Creation, Redemption, graces, the Sacraments, all the means and spiritual succors tend to no other end than to procure unto man eternal glory. Even visible and corporeal things, as the heavenly Bodies, animals, plants and all creatures, are made to bring man unto that end, and to serve him as so many means by which he may arrive there. For which reason, all our views, our desires, our thoughts, and actions, ought to be directed to the same end, and if it be not so, man becomes a monster of horror and ingratitude.

Yet How many are there [...] who do not only cease to labour so unhappy mortals are there acquire heaven, and even to think of it, but who carrying their madness so far as to higher pitch, pay no regard they can to it, as tho’ it were [...] do all that is in their power to render them selves unworthy of it and to be for ever deprived thereof. Let us strive at present, on the occasion of the great solemnity which hath assembled us here to make them detest their deplorable ingratitude, in placing before their eyes some glimpse of the immense riches which they so insolently despise, and which may serve at the same time to animate us all to labour without intermission and with an invincible courage to merit the possession of the same.

Amongst the different definitions which Divines give of eternal happiness I remark these three. Beatitude say they is the absence of all evils and the aggregation of all good things; it is a perfect state than which one can either desire or conceive a better. tis the possession of the sovereign good which is God: That is to say

[1 Illegible: Archer’s intention is unclear. The initial sentence, strikethroughs, and interlineations have been transcribed as could be determined by context. Word order is uncertain; see manuscript.]

[3] the happiness which the Saints enjoy in Heaven, is universal and incomprehensible. For if God as faith teaches us, is the Source and principle of all good, the absolute good, the infinite and
essential good, those that possess him, do consequently possess in him every good thing; they are entirely replenished [satiated], they can wish for nothing more, because in him they have all things. Hence this universality of happiness in glory that excludes all indigence [want]; hence the incomprehensibility of this happiness which hath neither bounds nor end. Let us begin by the first.

Man is composed of two parts equally essential to him; tho’ not of the same nature. One is purely spiritual, and the other entirely material; thus they are capable of different actions, altho’ the one can do nothing meritorious with out the other. Therefore to render man perfectly happy, tis necessary that all that composes him, participate of his happiness. But at the same time the pleasures must be proportioned to the subject that receives them. This Almighty God hath done in an admirable manner for his elect. He heaps upon them such an abundance of delights, and so suitable to their dispositions, that all the faculties of their souls, and all the members of their bodies partake of the common happiness; in such sort as to be replenished and satisfied with profusion.

The bodies of the Blessed are continually applied unto all that can satisfy their inclinations and Capacities. Their eyes are recreated with all that can be represented the most delightful Assemble together all that’s most beautiful produced by the most beautiful productions of nature, and that’s most rare invented by art; the splendor of the Sun, the shining of the Stars, the verdure of the fields, all the variety of beautiful flowers[,] the immense riches of all of the Gold and Diamonds together, the most magnificent towns and Palaces, sumptuous cloathing, the company of the most beautiful persons in the world: all this is no more than a little dust. in comparison of the magnificent objects with which the holy Zion shall be replenished. If one hath seen persons as it were enraptur’d at the sight of some great action [grand scene] as the entry of a Thing in to his Capital City, his Coronation, the Triumph of a Conqueror; if a certain holy Bishop, seeing the riches and beauties of the City of Rome one day when King Theodoric appear’d there in state was so agreeably surprised, that he cried out with astonishment: if terrestrial Rome be so magnificent what will be the celestial Jerusalem? if the Qeen of Saba [Queen of Sheba] considering the Palace and the delightful gardens of Salomon, his Equipage, his treasures, his Court, the good order established in his state and amongst his Officers, as to be in a manner out of herself with admiration, what will not be the transports and raptures of the Saints at the sight of all the beauties of Heaven.

You remember undoubtedly Dª Aud. [Dear Auditors] what happened on mount Thabor [Tabor]. Jesus Christ, after having foretold to his Apostles the humiliations of his Death, and the
great Conflicts they were to indure for his name, was pleased to animate them unto such

great labours by a vision which was to be a foretaste of the recompense that he had prepared for

them. He chose the three principal among them to be witnesses of this great event; he took them
to the top of the mountain and transfigurated himself in their presence. His face became

shining like the Sun, his garments appeared as white as snow, and his sacred person became

invironed[2] with so great a glory and Majesty, that the three Disciples being seized with an

inconceivable astonishment and holy fear, that they fell on their faces and knew not where they

were. Nevertheless this was but a little ray of his glory which Jesus Christ our Saviour made

appear on his body, proportioned to the weakened of those to whom it was discovered. What

then must not be the immense weight of all this glory put together which is revealed to the

Saints in his heavenly kingdom.

How delightful will it be to see our Saviour placed at the right hand of his eternal Father

and exalted above all creatures! How delightful to see the Queen of Angels and Saints next to her

Son above whom there is none but the Divinity that is the three adorable persons of the blessed

Trinity. How delightful to see the almost infinite number of celestial Spirits, divided in to three

orders, and each order into three Choirs with an admirable Subordi [-]

[2 “invironed” – (Mid. Fr.- Mid. Eng.) Variant of “environed”: encircled, surrounded, encompassed.]

[-] nation! How delightful to see all the elect seated upon magnificent Thrones, as so many

Kings, with Crowns on their heads and cloathed with the Robe of immortality! How delightful to

see all the orders of Saints, all shining with glory and majesty. The Patriarchs and Prophets the

Triumphant army of Martyrs, the troops of Confessors and Penitents, the prodigious number of

holy Virgins who incessantly sing the Canticle always new and follow the lamb wheresoever he

goes.

If St. John Baptist or any other of the great Servants of God so renowned in the holy

Scriptures, should appear on earth, who is there that would not quit his most important affairs,

and undertake a long journey to have the honour of once speaking with him? But if it were the

Blessed Virgin or Jesus Christ our Saviour himself that should appear now as he did heretofore

in Judea where is the Christian that would not sacrifice all that is most dear to him in the world to

transport himself to the place where he should be, altho’ it were at the extremity of the earth.

What then will not be the raptures

of the Blessed who shall enjoy the familiars of God himself, who shall converse with all the Holy

mother of our Saviour, and with all holy Angels and Saints of heaven?
The ears of the Blessed will be enchanted with the sweet concerts of the angelicale voices and with the agreeable harmony of divine singing, which will incessantly resound in the celestial Jerusalem. Their smell will be embalmed with the perfumes of inconceivable sweetness. Their taste will be satiated with an incorruptible liquour. What prodigious change do the penitents and poor experience? Instead of bread mixt with ashes, and water mingled with tears, a divine nouriture; instead of a poor cottage or hut the imperial heaven; instead of rags or hairshirts, the robe of immortality. Take courage then poor afflicted and infirm; and you to whom life is a continual cross and mortification, as yet a few days to suffer, and then you will enter into the joy of the Lord. Then you will cry out with the illustrious penitent S Peter of Alcantra [Alcantara]. O, happy penance. O precious cross that hath merited unto me so great a Glory! Then saith the Prophet Isaih, you will see which hath obtained me so great a reward.

["nouriture" – (Anglo-Nor., Mid. Fr., Lat.) Nourishment, food, diet.]

and be astonished [interlined without strikethrough] in admiration; and your heart shall be dilated, and replenished with all sorts of good things. O sensess [senseless] men, who labour all your life time to gain and pareserve [preserve] a little temporal possession, who sacrifice your rest, your time, your care, and often your souls and consciences for a vile interest, a little gain which you must soon quit, who even think the day commanded by the Almighty to be kept holy lost or improperly spent if not employed in [...] service in the service and repose of your corruptible bodies: Why do you not carry your ambition and cares to the gaining of heaven for your immortal Souls. Did you but change the object of your motives, you might for at little expense, you might gain a kingdom replenished with riches, pleasures, and rest which will never end. Why then do you amuse your selves with and so earnestly seek after that which so little deserves your attention and will only serve to torment you?

Let us here add the admirable qualities with which the bodies of the Blessed shall be indued.[4] That admirable clarity which will make them shine like stars of an incomparable beauty; This impassibility, that will render them impenetrable unto the pangs of grief or death; no longer sickness or infirmities no longer toil and weariness labor or fatigue no more hunger or thirst, nor other necessities, no longer fear nor tediousness nor other miseries. That agility and subtlety which will render them spiritual and capable of penetrating the thickest bodies, and of transporting themselves in an instance, and without any difficulty from one extremity of the universe to the other. They are no longer sacks of Corruptions, insupportable burthens, living carcasses, but are vessels of honour, a precious workmanship, and of a most astonishing beauty. Carnal men and worldly women, who so much love and cherish your bodies,
who take such great precautions to keep away all that may fatigue them, who so eagerly cultivate a passing and dangerous beauty, and who have so great a desire [inclination] of rendering your selves immortal and of avoiding all the incommodities of this life, you that are so greedy of eager after pleasures and all that can satisfy you, permit [Let] me to exhort you to take different means to attain to what you aim at [obtain your end]. Instead

[11]
of walking in following the broad road of sensuality and carnal pleasures that will lead you to eternal torments, walk in the narrow road of penance, resist the evil propensions of your corrupt nature, harken not to the brutal desires of your criminal flesh, but subdue its unruly appetites in order to procure it eternal felicity.

But what shall we say of the pleasures that the elect enjoy in their Souls? They are equally universal since they fill all the its faculties of the soul. Their memory is replenished and occupied with innumerable and inconceivable good things, with which they are as it were overflowing [inundated]: their understanding is absorpt in the clear vision of God; they shall see him as he is in himself. It will be no longer through shaddows, and amidst the obscurities of faith; they will see him through his essence; they will see him with his perfections, and face to face; & they will contemplate in his light, the secrets and mysteries of his greatness, his power, his immensity, his wisdom, his justice, his mercy and all his other attributes. The will of the Blessed shall be entirely possessed and replenished with the love of their Sovereign good. They shall be all enflamed with this holy love;

[12]
and this ardent Charity shall so closely unite them to their God that they shall be with him as but one and the same thing.

If we consider the place of abode of the Blessed we can form no just Idea thereof serve yourselves of whatsoever comparisons you please; use all the possible efforts of your imagination, you will be always infinitely short of its grandure. O Israel crieth out a certain Prophet[,] how great is the House of God.[15] The understanding of man is no wise capable of comprehending its immensity. If we attend to the beauty and richness of this magnificent place where shall we find comparisons. If you call to mind what the holy Scriptures and diverse Authors say of the terrestrial Paradise, of this delicious place replenished with such admirable delights: This was no more than a place of passage and heaven is an eternal mansion destined for the triumphs and victories of Jesus Christ, and all the generous Soldiers who shall have fought after the example of this great Captain. If we admire the magnificence of the towns and palaces inhabited by sinners and mortal men. What shall

[5 See Baruch 3:24.]
we think of the palace of the King of Kings, the abode of the Creator, and the mansion of the elect and friends of God. O amiable abode crieth out St. Austin! O magnificent Kingdom that hath God for its king, truth for its law, and eternity for its term! O delightful City where there are as many Saints as inhabitants, and Kings as Citizens; where there is day without night, light without darkness, spring without Winter, joy without sorrow, rest without labour, life without death; where pleasures are without disgust, riches without inquietude, & honours without ambition!

This happiness far exceeds our comprehension since to comprehend it, this happiness it would be necessary to comprehend what it is to possess God since the possession of God is the essence thereof. And this is what made the great Apostle to say, that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it enter'd in to the heart of man what things God hath prepared for those who love him.[⁶] Heaven is a Kingdom which Jesus Christ hath prepared purchased at the price of his sufferings, blood and death. And he doth not give it but at the expense of our labours, sufferings and good works. Pay attention D[Dear] Bretheren

[⁶ See 1 Corinthians 2:9; see also Isaiah 64:4.]

Heaven is a Kingdom that God himself hath made a Conquest of ______ [strike to margin] Heaven is a Kingdom which the Saviour of the world, God made man...hath made the Conquest of; and how? by his immense labours and most cruel and unheard of death. What did he not do during the thirty three years of his mortal life! What watchings,[⁷] what fatigues[;] but what shall we say of his Passion, of this agony in the garden of Olives, when he sweat blood and water, of this bloody whipping |scourging| and the frightful situation to which he was reduced on the Cross? If one drop of this precious blood was of infinite worth what can we think of the whole treasure of his merits? But he hath shed the last drop of his precious blood; he hath sacrificed his life to acquire |purchase| and merit heaven for us. What then is the value of a Kingdom purchased at so dear a rate by our Saviour[?] Let us bring together collect all that is the most difficult that the law of God and the holy Gospel commands: The renouncing of ourselves, of the continual carrying of our cross; the crucifying of our passions; the loving of our enemies, being contented with poverty, sufferings, and humiliations, the disguising of the goods honours riches and pleasures of the world. And then this is all This D[Dear] Christians is all we have to do for it this

[⁷ “watching(s)” – Wakefulness, vigilance, guarding, unsleeping.]

is what we must do to receive an eternal glory for the purchasing [of] this inestimable treasure[.] This is what the Saints whose memory we celebrate on this day have done with exactitude.
Let us not hesitate then one single moment D' Christians a moment, to [in] resolving to sacrifice all, to obtain so great a happiness. The example of all the Saints whose memory the Church celebrates on this great Day strongly invites us thereunto. There are not proposed to us as models, those heroes of religion, those famous Penitents, whose lives were a series of such great and extraordinary mortifications, that one cannot hear spoken of without fear; and especially of the martyrs of Jesus Christ who have sufferd such horrible torments, who have shed their blood and sacrificed their life for their faith, but there are proposed to us the Saints of our own state, age, and condition, of our own country; there are no doubt some amongst them, with whom, we, have loved and conversed, there are of our relations friends, and acquaintance[s], whose lives have manifested nothing extraordinary, and whom we may easily imitate if we will. They have been subject to the same infirmities, the same temptations, and the same trials as we ourselves; and we have the same helps, the same graces, the same sacraments, and the same means as they had. What saith S't Austin

you cannot do what so many weak delicate and infirm persons of [...] conditions [...] sex every age, sex, and condition have done and continue to do! See what is done in the world for a little ambition, honour, and fortune, and what is still more astonishing, to satisfy their passions, to please themselves, to revenge themselves, to damn themselves.

Courage then, Christian Aud [Auditors]. Let us animate ourselves to the conquest of this Kingdom, and whatsoever it may cost you [...] cost what it will [to] gain the victory, that we may obtain an immortal crown. Every one may aspire to this great happiness; the rich the poor, the King and the subject. It depends on you to be Kings and Queens in heaven, to shine like the Sun throughout all ages, seated on thrones with crowns on your heads. Then you will be more rich than all the Emperors and Kings in the world, more honourd than were ever the greatest men on earth, you will be among the Angels and the princes of the Celestial Court. The poor beggar may change if he pleases his rags for the robe of immortality. Sick & infirm and languishing, in a few days you may be citizens of that delightful City where there is neither weakness, pains, nor sickness. All you who are present hearken unto what I say, you may participate of the same happiness: you have only to use a little violence in order to render yourselves faithful [...] to the commands of God commanded you, you have only to begin to do what the Saints do in heaven, that is to, to [word duplicated] love your the Lord God with your whole heart, and your neighbours as yourselves. This I sincerely wish you. In the Name of the Father, &c. [etc.] ——.