And the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plain. Words taken out of the 7th Chap. of S't Mark and 35[th] Verse[.]

The gospel out of which I took | have taken | my text teacheth us a very remarkable circumstance in the miracle which Jesus Christ wrought in the cure of the dumb man; it saith that he looked up to Heaven and sighed before he performed this marvel: upon which interpreters say that it was to shew how dangerous a thing it was to render unto a man the use of speech which he might so easily abuse and serve himself of to his misery. Truely de' [dear] Brethren can we consider without fear, the innumerable crimes and excesses which the unbridled tongue produces? How many monsters doth it not bring forth? Obscene words; calumnies and detractions; Swaring, false oaths and lies; evils reports, blasphemies, injuries and imprecations: in such sort that S't James calls it a world of iniquity, and with good reason, for one cannot comprehend the evils it causes. I propose to speak at present of some of those evils which are so common in the world and at the same time so dangerous. In the first part of my discourse I shall treat of swaring, false oaths, and lies; and in the second I shall say something on blasphemy and imprecations.

To swear, is to call God to witness to what one asserts or denies; or his creatures in as much as God is their author and they in a special manner appertain to him this Jesus Christ teaches us when he says that you must not swear by Heaven because it is the Throne of God; neither by the earth because it is his footstool[,] neither by thy head, for thou cannot make one Hair white nor black. He adds that our speech should be yes and no and that what is more than these proceedeth from evil: This decision is very clear. However this rule as possitive as it appears is not without exception. For there are cases in which it is not only permitted but ordered to serve ourselves of an oath as a lawful and necessary means to discover the truth, an oath being an act of religion by which the authority of God as the supreme Verity is interposed.

But an oath to be lawful must have three conditions which the Holy Ghost teaches us by the mouth of one of his prophets. When you swear he says it must be in truth and in judgment, and in justice. Let us explain these three qualities. first it ought to be in truth, that is it is never permitted to swear falsely upon any account whatever, altho there were questions of
saving the life I will not say of a man or the lives of a whole County [Nation]. And as often as a
person swears falsely, how so ever light the matter be, he is guilty of a mortal sin, because he
calls God to witness a falsehood which is an atrocious injury to him who is the supreme verity.
Now one may be guilty of a false oath various ways: viz. when one |he| asserts a thing that is
false and knows it to be so, when one |he| affirms a thing that is doubtful; when one |he| affirms a
thing that he believes to be false tho’ in reality it be true; when one |he| affirms a thing that is
false and believes it to be true if he hath not done what he ought to discover the truth; when one
|he| is habituated to swear indifferently to truth or falsehood. Let us deplore the blindness of
those who swear falsely and at the sun[,] of those unhappy people |men| who, for a little sum of
money, for a handful for earth, for nothing, invoke falsely the holy name of God, give
themselves to the Devil, and

[4]
to hell. Unhappy swearers harken unto what the Holy Ghost who says by his Prophet Zachary[,] The curse of God shall come to the House of |Chap 5th| him that sweareth falsely: and it shall
remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it, with the timber thereof, and the stones
thereof.[1] Terrible expressions, but which can never give a perfect idea of the evils that false
oaths bring upon sinners.

The second condition that renders an oath lawful, is justice, that is that it is never
permitted to swear for unjust things, and if the oath that one hath pronounced hath occasioned
any wrong to his neighbour he hath thereby contracted a strict obligation of repairing the whole
damage.

The third condition is judgment; that is to say, One ought not to swear himself nor oblige
others to swear but in an urgent and inevitable necessity. And in order to give you a certain rule
on this head, I must tell you that you ought not to swear except you are obliged thereunto by the
authority of a lawful judge. If there should happen an extraordinary case where an oath appear
indispensable for the |pre| conservation of your goods or honour, you might take
an oath even out of the court of justice, but do not do this[.]

[1 See Zacharias 5:3–4.]

[5]
Nebuchad-"Nebuchodonosor[2]
ordered by a solemn edict; that if anyone should blaspheme the God of Israel
he should suffer immediate death, all his goods should be confiscated, and his house razed.
Excellent lessons for the heads of Comunities and families. Fathers and Mothers, Masters and

[2 “Nebuchodonosor” or “Nabuchodonosor”; variant transliterated forms of “Nebuchadnezzar.” Perhaps a
reference to 2 Paralipomenon (2 Chronicles) 36:13; “He also revolted from king Nabuchodonosor, who
had made him swear by God: and he hardened his neck and his heart, from returning to the Lord the God
of Israel.” (DRB).]
Mistresses vindicate the honour of an offended God; do not suffer among those who are under your charge these enormous crimes which will draw the malediction of God upon you.

Lastly the 3rd motive that engages us to avoid oaths, curses, and Blasphemies, is the infamy with which this vice covers those who are subject to it. For truly who can stay in bear their Company? Who can hear without trembling, without horror, their frightful speeches? To be with a Blasphemer of the name of God, with a wicked man who comes out with vomits execrations which [that] make one’s hair stand an end; is it not to be with a Devil incarnate? Is not the language of this wicked man that of these miserable wretches whose abode is in the darkness of eternal death? Besides there is not a more visible sign of reprobation, than to be abandoned to so dreadful a habit of such discourse [such speeches],

Do we not know by the accent and language of a person of what Country he is? now oaths and Blasphemies are the language of the infernal dungeon, is it not then certain that this frightful dungeon dreadful place is the Country of Swearers & Blasphemers?

Detest then DⅢ Breth, from the bottom of yr [your] hearts the horrible custom of uttering such words, and make use of every means possible to correct yourselves if you have the unhappiness to be engaged therein. Do not say that the habit you have contracted excuses you, for howsoever great and inveterate it may be, if you have not retracted it, and do not use a make all your efforts seriously labour to overcome it, you are only the more culpable. Consider then attentively how enormous these crimes are[,] how they outrage the Majesty of God, how great are the punishments destined for them, and meditate often on all the other motives that engage you to avoid them. When it shall happen that you fall into them through surprise, humble yourselves immediately before the Lord; impose some penance on yourselves, and say to yourselves: wicked wretch thou wilt then precipitate thyself into the abyss of hell since thou beginest in this life to speak the infernal language.[3] beg of some friend to remind

[3 Archer’s intention here is unclear. Multiple words in this sentence were not stricken and have been transcribed accordingly. See manuscript.]

Besides, out of the judiciary court and in private [blank to margin] Besides, when there is question of persuading out of the judiciary court or in private it is a very
bad means to add an oath to that end: For a man who is capable of swearing in cases forbidden by the law of God, is much more capable of lying; and this is so true, that there is not more credit given to a man accustomed to swear than to a professed liar. Nothing is more to be suspected than these sort of people.

Let us now come to lying. A lie according to Divines is a false signification of something with a design to deceive. I say first that it is a false signification of something. For one may lie in speaking, by sign,

by writing, in making certain motions that are equivalent to words. I say in the second place, with a design of deceiving those who hear it; or if he speak in such manner as to make known that he doth not speak seriously, it would be no lie. Thus Parables, exagerations & fables are not regarded as lies. Lies are divided into material and formal; evident and hidden; into jocose, officious & pernicious. A material lie is when one says a thing that is false which he believes to be true, which if it be [...] done through intemperance of the tongue, or with out for want of sufficiently examining whether what is said in order to discover the truth or falsehood, is not exempt from fault. a formal lie consists in speaking contrary to what one thinks: with an intention of deceiving. An evident lie is that which is not palliated with any circumstance that takes away the knowledge of it[-] Lies are ordinarily trifold. Malicious lies which are spoken to the prejudice of ones neighbours, Officious lies which are told to excuse ourselves or others, and lies of jest which are made to divert company.

Now a lie whatsoever it be, is not permitted on any account whatever. This is an incontestable truth established by the holy Scripture, decided by the Church, and sustained by the holy Doctors. The holy Text says that lying Lips are an abomination to God; especially pernicious that amongst many things that the Creator hath a particular horror for[,] the tongue of a liar holds one of the first places. And our blessed Saviour in his holy Gospel says that a lie hath the Devil for its father, effectually the spirit of Darkness first introduced it into the world in saying to Adam and Eve that they would not die tho’ they should eat of the fruit of which God had forbidden them under pain of Death. What horror ought we not to have for a vice which was the cause of so many miseries being entailed on us[.] Do not then think then that lies the habit of lying to be but a small fault which hath caused so many miseries to be intailed on mankind and do not cease to be the origin of a great many evils since a habit of lying is the origin of a great many evils, it brings on a corruption of manners; its a mean and despicable vice its a mean and despicable vice; its a blemish to reason to speak contrary to knowledge and the sense
of things. Besides to what infamy doth not an habitual liar condemn himself? How will he be regarded by people of integrity? What credit will [word duplicated] be given to his discourses? When any thing that’s new is talked of, one asks who said it; and if it be a person accustomed to lying, they would conclude it to be false and would act prudently. Let every one then correct himself of this fault and let parents in particular look well to their Children and chastise them for lying, to which they are but too naturally addicted. This is Christian Aud. [Auditors] what I had to say to you concerning Oaths and lies; It now remains that I speak to you on Imprecations & Blasphemies.

By imprecations are understood injurious words, so common in the world, which one utters against his neighbour, against himself, against insensible and irrational creatures. There is so great a number of these vilinous [villainous] words and there are some so horrid, that one could not comprehend from whence they came if he was not persuaded that that they were invented in the infernal regions and spread among men by the instigation of the spirit of darkness. How could one persuade himself that a man as a rational being, much less as not to say a Christian, could be capable of abandoning himself to such a degree as to utter such execrable speeches if sad experience did not daily shew us?

Truely must not a person have lost his senses to vomit execrations which cause horror to the hearers, to make [form] a habit of it, and far from being ashamed of it, take a diabolical vanity therein. Must he not have be come entirely brutish to take occasion from animals, from insensible creatures; to throw himself into a passion and speak horrible injuries against the weather, against the earth, against a stone, against his work? Must he not have lost every sentiment of reason and religion, to dedicate himself [give himself up] unto the divine vengeance, to give himself to the evil spirit, to wish himself the most dreadful evils, to invoke death, the Demon, the curse of the Almighty, against himself, against his children, against his servants, against his wife and against his goods? wicked and perverse men, where what would become of you if the Lord should hear you in his wrath? would you not merit that he should cause that malediction to fall on your criminal heads which you invoke with so much fury? Do you not fear that his patience at length tired out should befall you up to him whom you have given yourselves perhaps a hundred times? And if terrible accidents should befall you, losses, mortalities in your beasts [cattle], [...; perhaps a corrected miswriting of “fires”], and other scourges of the divine vengeance, whom must you blame but yourselves? But unhappy people [men], why do you utter such detestable words? what profit do you draw [reap] from them?: what plea where is the pleasure you find in such discourse[?] What satisfaction in uttering such maledictions? is it not equaling in malice the wicked souls who suffer in eternal flames[?]
Blasphemy is still something more dreadful. It is an injurious speech pronounced against God or his Saints. One may Blaspheme in four different ways. first by attributing unto God what he hath not, nor cannot have. as to say that God hath some defect, that he is ignorant of some thing, that he is the author of sin: 2ndly by denying some perfection in God as to say that he is not just almighty, merciful, & infinite in every perfection: 3rdly by denying him, by cursing him, by adding when they pronounce his adorable name some injurious words as Head, Blood, wounds, and others such like: 4thly By saying injurious words against The sacred Humanity of Jesus Christ, against the Blessed Virgin, & the angels and saints.

It remains for me now, D' Brth. to give you some motives to prevent you from falling into such excesses for the future if you have had the unhappiness to be subject to them. I have chosen three principal ones; the grievousness of these Crimes, the horrible chastisements |punishments| that accompany them and the infamy that they trail |follow| after them. The first motive that engages us is to avoid oaths, imprecations and Blasphemies is the grievousness of these excesses |crimes|. When the holy | Job Cap 2.| scripture speaks of blasphemy it is only in figurative terms & dares not utter those detestable words of Cursing and blaspheming God almighty. St. Jerome hesitates not to say that all the crimes may be regarded as light in comparison of Blasphemy. Saint Chrysostom assures that there is no sin greater than it, nor even that equals it. Saint Austin teaches us that those who Blaspheme God reigning in Heaven, are guilty of a much greater crime than those who crucified him, whilst he was on earth in a passible state.

We shall understand still better the grievousness of Oaths curses and Blasphemies, by the dreadful punishments which have been their fatal consequences; and this is the second motive that engages us to detest them. Both sacred and prophane Histories are full of terrible examples on this subject. I shall touch upon some of them. The sacred Text recounts to us that Sedecias[4] having violated the oath of fidelity which he had taken to the King of Babylon was bound with chains, his eyes were put out and his children were slain in his presence. Sennacherib, after having blasphemed the holy name of God, and lifted up his sacrilegious hands against the Temple, saw his army cut to pieces by an angel; he was put to flight, and far from finding any consolation in his family, his own Children cruelly assassinated him. Antiochus after having uttered horrid imprecations, was stricken by the hand of God, and altho’ he appeared sincerely to ask pardon of his crimes he was nevertheless rejected and died a reprobate.

[4 The Latin Vulgate and Douay-Rheims Bible version of “Zedekias/Zedekiah.”]
The laws have severely punished false oaths and Blasphemies. The penitential Canons order that he who hath Blasphemed the holy Name of God, shall remain seven Sundays at the Church door during the divine Service, and that on the seventh he shall be there bare foot and with a cord about his neck; that he shall fast seven fridays on bread and water; and that on each of these fridays he shall nourish 2 or 3 poor people according to his abilities; and if he will not submit to this penance he will be cut off from the Church, and after his death his body thrown upon a dunghill. The edicts of some Kings are very severe. The pagans themselves have punished very severely the Blasphemers of their Divinities, & those who swear falsely.

[15]

When you use any ill p[...] [lacuna *]

a religious silence, and ne[...] [lacuna *]

reflecting what you say.

Great God how admirable is you[...] [lacuna *]

how infinite your mercy! How as[...] [lacuna *]

the excess of your patience go!. You see worms of the earth rise up against you and attack you even upon even upon the Throne of your glory; you hear your holy name blasphemed. These wicked creatures use your authority to prove the most manifest falsehoods and to support their most crying injustices; they take you for witness to their crimes, their revenge, and their abominations: and you suffer all this without complaining or saying a single word! Have you then forgotten your grandure and your Majesty? will you become the laughing stock of your enemies? It is not as yet time saith the Lord: I will wait for the moment decreed by my justice, but this moment will soon come when I will shower down my vengeance upon the impiou[...] and I will command the earth to open itself and swallow them up in the abyss.

[* A triangular section constituting the top, outside corner of this page is missing.]

[16]

[...]s and Blasphemers, how [lacuna *]

[...] wage war against God? How [lacuna *]

[...] you raise |lift| yourselves up against [lacuna *]

[...]en like Lucifer! How long will you join in league with the Damned to |in| talking their detestable language? How long will you pierce his heart with the dart of your tongue of execrable speeches? Ah, enter into yourselves! do a severe penance: consecrate for the future your criminal tongue to bless the holy name of God in order to repare the injuries you have done him for the time past; so that you may find mercy, and be admitted into the number of those who shall praise and glorify him for ever and ever. Which I heartily wish you[.] In the Name &c. [etc.]

[* A triangular section constituting the top, outside corner of this page is missing.]