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<Text: Mirror of the Life of Christ>

<fol. 4r>partye and ye firste chapitle A deuoute meditacioun of ye
 grete conseile in heuene for restorynge of man and his
 saluacioun ¶ <lat>Capitulum primum & prima pars</lat>

After ye tyme yat man was exilede oute of ye hye
 cite of heuene by ye ry3tewys dome of all-my3ty
 god souereyne kynge yer-of for his trespas and his
 synne and so wrechedly lay in prison & was haldenn in ye bandes
 of yat tirante ye deuell of hell y^t none myghte come
 a3eyne to yat blessed cite ye space of fyue yowsand~ 3er~
 & more alle ye blessid spirites of heuene desiryng ye restorynge
 of her companye y^t was falle down w^t lucifere hadden
 grete compassioun of so longe myschefe of man y^t was to her
 restorynge and prayden ofte for his restorynge but specialy
 & w^t more instaunce whenn ye tyme of grace was to men ;
 what tyme as we mowen deuoutely ymagine ; alle
 ye blessed~ componye of aungels gederede to-gedyr with
 one wille and souereyne deuocioun fellen down prostrate to
 fore ye throne of almy3ty god kynge of heuene and Gabriell
 to whome as seynte Bernarde seyy was made speciale
 reuelacioun of cristes Incarnacion in her alle name
 seyde in yis maner~ . almy3ty lorde it likede to 3our~ hye
 maieste of 3our~ endeles godenes to make of no3te y^t
 noble and resonable creature man for our~ comforte &
 our~ godenes y^t of hym schulde be made ye restorynge of our
 false companye lucifer and his felawes y^t fellen down fro
 vs by apostasye so yat he schulde dwelle her~ in yis
 blessed~ w^t vs longynge & wyrchippyng 3ow w^t-outenn
 ende . But lo gode lorde nowe alle yai perischen & none
 is sauede & in so many yousande 3ere passede ; we sene
 none of hem alle here . Our~ enmyes hauen ye victory &

of hem our~ party is not restorede but ye prison of helle
 <fol. 4v>continuely fillede wher to lorde be yai borne to so grete
 myschefe . For yaw it be done after 3our~ ry3twysnes ; neueryeles
 lorde it is now tyme of mercy haue in mynde y^t 3e made
 hem after 3oure owne liknes and yawe her forenfadres
 folily and wrecchedly breken 3our~ maundement ; neueryeles
 3our~ mercy is aboue alle yyngre wherefore her alle yen ben
 sette up-on 3ow as ye seruauntes on ye lordes handes til 3e
 haue mercy & helpe hem wyy a .^[heleful] spedeful remedy .

<lat>**De contencione**

inter misericordiam et veritate</lat>

Here-wiy began a maner of altercacion & disputesoun
 betwene ye four~ kynges doughtres y^t is to say ; mercy
 and soyfastnes pees & ryghtwisnes Of ye which
 four~ mercy & pees acordynge to ye aungels prayer forseide ; were
 fouorable to mannes restorynge But y^t oyer two sistres soyfastnes
 & ryghtwisnes a3eyne seyden ; As seynte Bernard
 by deuoute meditacioun makey here of a processe faire & longe
 But forto take yer-of schortely as to our~ purpose at yis tyme;
 sumwhat in oyer maner & in oyer wordes we mow ymagine ; sumwhat
 in oyer maner & in oyer wordes and yenk yus First mercy and pees
 knelynge to-fore her fader kyng of heuene by ye prophetes
 wordes dauid saide yus ; lorde schalt yu caste a-wey fro ye
 man w^touten ende ; or haste yu fore3eten to do mercy ; And yis
 ofte and longe tyme yai rehersedden, yan said our~ lorde let
 clepe forye 3our~ oyer two sistres ye which 3e seen redy a3eynes
 3ow & lett vs see also what yai wole say her~-to And
 yai were clepede & comen alle to-gedir ; mercy began and
 saide in yis wyse ; my fader of mercy it was 3our~ will euer
 w^touten ende amonge 3our~ oyer doughtres my sistres to
 3eue me y^t prerogatyue aboue alle oyer werkes y^t not onely
 y schulde specyaly regne here w^t 3ow in heuene but also
 y^t ye erylle schulde be replenyschede & filled~ w^t me to so my
 <fol. 5r>kel vertue ; pat who so wolde treuly & besily aske my helpe in
 any myschefe or nede ; he schulde w^touten faile fynde 3our~
 socour & helpe yurg ye meditacioun of me . But now lo my
 dere fader w^t worry partye of erylle and 3our~ noble creature
 man in his grete wrecchednes & myschefe so longe
 tyme liggynge crieuy continually & askey after my helpe

and now tyme is comen in ye which but 3if 3e helpe &
 saue hym ; y perysche & lese my name here a3eynes y^t
 oyer sister sofastnes seyde . And 3e knowen wele my fader
 soyfast god yat y am ye begynnynge of 3our~ wordes . And
 after 3e made man in so grete worrynes y^t 3e weddet
 me to hym in y^t condicion y^t what tyme he breke 3oure
 heste ; he & alle y^t comen of hym schulde lese her blessed
 life & be dampnede & done to deye wherefore he forsoke
 me & betoke hym to 3oure enmye & myne ye fader of
 lesynge ; wytnesse my sister ryghtwisnes y perysche &
 lese my name but he haue ye deye y^t he haue deseruede .
 yan spake ryghtwisnes & seyde Ryghtwys lorde my fader
 y^u haste ordeynede me gouernour of yi dome lastynge w^touten
 ende and my sister treuye techer of yi lawe & al-yough
 it so be y^t oure sister mercy be stered~ of pitte & a gode 3ele for
 mannes sauacioun ; neueryeles in y^t sche wolde haue hym y^t
 hay so gretely forfeitede a3eynes 3ow & vs also ; w^t-outen
 dew satisfaccioun ; she wolde destruye vs boye hir sistren
 yat is to say ; treuye & ryghtwisnes & fordo our~ name
 herewyy ye ferye sister come forye y^t is to sey pees . and
 so firste sobirly blamyng hir sistres for her contrariouse
 wordes & her strife seide to hem yus knowe 3e not wele
 sistres y^t oure fader haue ordeynede & made his place
 only yer as y am & y may not abide ne welle yer as is strife
 an dissencion & y^t is not semely but fully a3eynes kynde
 <fol. 5v>to be amonge vertues . wherefore but 3e cesen of strife & be
 acordet ; y moste forsake 3ow & my fader also lo her~ a grete
 controuersy betwene yese foure doughters of our~ lorde &
 so grete resouns y^t it was not seyn how y^t in mannes sauacioun
 mercy & soyfastnes pees & ryghtwisnes myghte fully
 be kepte & acordet . ¶ yan badde ye fader of heuene yat
 for as my kellee as he had comited & gifen alle his dome to
 his dere sone souereyne wisdom kyng euerlastynge w^t hym
 in one godehede ; yat yese four~ doghters schulde go to hym
 he to termyne yis questioun & gefe a dome yer-on . And ^ [yan] ye kyng
 souereyne wise-dome wrote ye sentence & ye dome in yis
 maner & toke it to his chaunceler Reson to rede it in his
 name seyng in yese wordes. yis dou3ter soyefastnes
 sei y^t sche perishey & lesey hir name but man haue ye deye

yat he hay deseruede & w^t hir acordey hir sister ryghtwisnes
 and on yat oyerside mercy sei y^t she perishey & lesey hir name
 but man haue mercy & be sauede and w^t hir acordey hir ferye
 sister pees . Wherfore to acorde alle yese to-gedir and for
 a finale dome in yis matier let be made a gode deye of
 man so y^t one be founden w^touten synne y^t may & wole
 innocently & for charite suffre deye for man ; & yan haue
 yai alle y^t yai asken For yan may not deye lengir halde
 hym y^t is w^t oute synne or trespas and so he schal perse
 hym makynge in hym a hole & a wey yurgh ye which man
 may passe & be sauede . In yis sentence & dome alle ye *courte*
 of heuene wondrynge & *commendynge* ye *souereyne* wysedome
 ; assentenden wele here to but foryermore askeden
 amonge hemselve where y^t one my3te be founden y^t schuld
 fulfille & do yis dede of charite . And yan mercy toke w^t hir
 reson & soughte amonge alle ye ordres of aungels in
 heuene to see wheyer any of hem wer able to do yis dede
 <fol. 6r>but yer was none . Also soyfastnes sou3te fro heuene to ye
 cloudes byneyen weyer yer were any creature y^t my3te *perfourme*
 it & yai were all vnable . Rightwisnes wente down to ye eryl
 amonge ye hie hilles and in-to ye depe pitte of helle wher~ yer
 were any man y^t myghte take yis gode & *innocente* deye but
 was none founden clene of synne ; no nor ye childe of one
 dayes birye & so she wente a3eyne vp to hir sistres tellyng
 y^t alle men hade forfeitede & weren vnable & yer was none
 y^t myghte do y^t gode dede wherfore yai wer alle ful sory &
 heuy y^t yai myghte not fynde y^t one y^t yai desirede . yan
 seyde pees wite 3e not wele y^t ye *prophete* y^t seyde yer is none founden
 y^t may do gode Afterwarde he puttey to more & sei y^t til
 it come to one . yis one man may be he y^t 3afe ye sentence
 forseide of *mannes* sauacioun . wherfore pray we hym yat
 he wille helpe & fulfille it in dede . For to hym spekey ye
prophete in ye same psalme forseide seyng . lorde y^u schalte
 saue man and bestes after yi mykel mercy . But yan was
 a question amonge ye sistres comitede to Reson for to
 termynen which person of yre fader & sone & holy goste
 one gode schulde be-come man & do yis merciful dede .
 yan seide Reson y^t for als mykell as ye person of ye fader
 is proprely dredeful & my3ty . ye person of ye sone al wise

& wytty . & ye *persoun* of ye holy+goste moste benygne & godely ; ye secounde *person* semey moste conueniente as to ye ful acorde of ye forseide sistres to skilful remedy of man & to ye moste resonable victory of ye enemy. ffor anentys ye firste ; 3if ye *person* of ye fader sulde do yis dede ; for his drede & myghte *mercy* & pees myghte *sumwhat* haue hym suspecte as not fully fauorable to *hem* . and so on y^t *oyerside* for ye *souereyne* benygnite & godenes of ye holy+goste ; trewe & ryghtwisnes my³te drede of not <fol. 6v>ful satisfaccioun bot to mykel *mercy* wherfore a gode mene euen to boye parties ye *person* of ye sone is moste conuenient to performe yis dede yurgh his *souereyne* witte and wisdom . ¶ Also it semeye moste skilful remedy to man for as mykell as he forfeitede by vnwytte & folye y^t satisfaccioun be made for hym by soyefaste wisdom y^t is ye sone so y^t as he felle to deye by ye false worde of ye fende y^t he rise a³eynn to life by ye trewe worde of gode . And as for moste resonable victory of ye enmye it is skilful y^t as he conquerede man by wikked sleghte & false wisdom so he be ouercomen & venkischede by gode sleghte & trewe wisdom . And whenn reson had seide yis *verdeit* ; ye fader seide it was wille y^t it schulde be so. ye sone 3afe his assente *yer-to* & ye holi+goste seide he wolde wirche *yer-to* also . And yan fallynge down alle spirites of heuene & *souereynly* yan kynge ye holy trinite . ye foure sistres forseide weren kyssede & made acorde & so was fulfilled y^t ye *prophete* dauid seide *Mercy* & soyefastnes metten louely to-gedir ryghtwisnes & pees hauen kissede . ¶ And yus was *terminet* & endet ye grete conseile in heuenn for ye restoryng of man & his sauacion ye which processe schal be taken as in liknes & only as a maner~ of *peroble* and deuoute ymaginacioun stiryng man to loue god *souereynly* for his for his grete *mercy* to man & his endles godenes . Also to honour & wirchipe ye blessed aungels of heuene for her gode wille to man & for his sauacion hauynge continuele bisines & also to loue *vertues* & hate synne y^t b.^[r]oughte man to so grete wrecchednes An yus mykell & in yis *maner* may be seide & youghte by deuoute contemplacioun of y^t was done aboue in heuene before ye Incarnacioun of ihesu . Nowe go we down to ye eryl

and yenke we how it stode w^t his blessed moder marie
 and what
 <fol. 7r><mrg> & what</mrg> hir lyuyng here before ye Incarnacioun of ihesu y^t foloweth
 after . Of ye maner of lyuyng of ye blessed *virgine* mary,
 As it is writenn in ye life of oure lady seynt Marie
 when she was yre 3ere olde ; she was offrede in
 ye temple of hir fadir & modir & yer she abode and
 dwelled in-to ye fourtene 3ere . An.^[d] what she dide & howe
 she lyuede yer-in y^t tyme we mowen knawe by ye reuelaciouns
 made of hir to a deuoute womman whiche men trowen
 was seynte Elizabeth in ye whiche reuelaciouns is contyned
 amonge oyer y^t oure lady tolde to ye same woman
 and saide in yis manere when my fader & my moder
 lasten me in ye temple y purposede & sette stably in my herte
 to haue god to me fader & oftesyyes w^t grete deuocioun y
 youghte what y myghte do plesynge to god so y^t he wolde
 vouchesafe to sende me his grace And herwi y was taght
 & ylernede ye lawe of my lorde gode . In ye which of alle ye
 hestes & biddynge principally y kepte yre in my herte . ye
 firste is y^u schalte loue yi lorde gode w^t alle yy herte w^t alle
 yi soule w^t alle yy mynde & w^t alle yy mightes . ye secunde
 you schalt loue yy neighbor as yy-selfe . And ye yridde is
 y^u schalte hate yyn enmy . yese y kepte treuly in herte and
 anone y conceyuede & toke alle ye vertues y^t ben contynede in
 hem . For yer may no soule haue vertue but it loue god w^t alle
 ye herte for of yis loue come alle plente of grace . And after
 it is comen it abidey not in ye soule but it renney oute
 as water . but it so be y^t he hate his enmyes y^t is to sey ; vices
 & synnes . wherefore he y^t wole haue grace & kepe it ; it behouey
 yat he dispose & ordeyne his herte to loue & to hate as it
 is seide And so J wole y^t you do in maner as y dide y rose vp
 algate at mydnyghte & wente before ye autere of ye temple
 & yerw^t als grete desire & wille & affeccioun as y cowde &
 <fol. 7v>myghte y askede grace of alle-myghty god to kepe yo yre hestes &
 alle oyer biddynge of ye lawe . And so stondynge byfore ye
 auter y made . vij . peticiouns to god ye whiche ben yese . First
 y askede grace of god yurgh ye whiche y my3te fulfille ye hest
 of loue y^t is to sey forto loue hym w^t alle my herte . ye
 secunde y asked yat y myghte loue my neighbor after his

wille & his lykyng & y^t he wolde make me to loue alle y^t
 he louey . ye yridde yat he wolde make me to hate & to
 eschewe alle yynges y^t he hatey . ye ferye ; y askede mekenes
 pacience benigne & suetnes & alle oyer vertues by ye
 which y myghte be graciouse & plesynge to goddes syghte ye
 fifte peticioun y made to god y^t he wolde lette me see ye tyme
 in ye whiche yat blessedde mayden schulde be borne y^t schuld
 conceyue & bere goddes sone and y^t he wolde kepe myne
 yen yat y myght see hir 3yue Myne eres y^t y myghte her~
 hir speke My tonge y^t y myghte praise hir Myne handes y^t
 y myghte serue hir wiy my feete y^t y myghte go to hir seruice
 . And my knees w^t which y myghte honoure & wyschipe
 goddes sone in hir barme In ye sexte peticioun y asked
 grace to be obeschaunte to ye biddynfes & ye ordinaunces of
 ye bischope of ye temple . And in ye . vij . y prayede god to kepe
 alle ye peple to his seruice . And when ye forseide cristes
 seruaunte hade yese wordes . she seide a3eyne A suete lady
 were not 3e full of *grace* & of alle *vertues* . And ye blessed maydenn
 marie ansuerde wite y^u wele for certeyne y^t y helde myselfe
 als gilty moste abiecte & vnworry ye *grace* of god ; as
 you And more ouer trowest y^u doghter yat alle ye *grace* y^t y hade
 w^t-oute trauayle ; Nay not so but y telle ye & do ye to wite
 y^t y hade no *grace* 3ifte ne *vertue* of god w^t-oute grete trauayle
 continuele prayer ardent desire *profounde deuocioun* and w^t
 many teres & mykell affliction spekyng yenyng and
 <fol. 8r>doynge alwey as y couy & my3te y^t was plesynge to god y^t is
 to sey ; outetake ye holy *grace* yurgh ye which y was halowede
 in my moder wombe . And foryer-more our~ lady seide witte y^u
 wele in certeyne y^t yer comey no *grace* in-to mannes soule but
 be prayer & bodely affliccioun . And after y^t we haue 3euen to
 god yo yynges y^t we mowenn yaugh yay ben litel & fewe ;
 yan come he in to ye soule bryngynge w^t hym so grete &
 so hie 3iftes of *grace* y^t it semey to ye soule y^t she faile in hirselfe
 & lesiey mynde & yenkey y^t euer she seide or dide any
 yyng plesynge to god & yan she semey in hir own sighte
 more foule & more wrecchede yan she was euer before . Alle
 yis sentence is contynede in ye forseide reuelaciouns . also
 seynte Jerome wrytynge of hir life sei y in yis *maner* yat ye
 blessedde maiden Marie ordeyned to hir-selfe yis *maner* of



reule in lyuyngē y^t fro ye mornetide in-to ye tierce of þe day ;
she 3afe hir alle to *prayers* & fro tierce in-to ye none ; she occupide
hir bodily w^t weuyngē werke . And efte fro none
she wente not fro *prayers* to ye aungell of god come and
apperede to hir of who hande she toke to ye bodily sustinaunce
and so she *profitede* algate *betterer* in ye werke & ye loue of god .