

SAINT BONAVENTURE ON THE HONEY OF DEVOTION AND THE LITTLE BEE

TO OBTAIN the honey of devotion, copy the method of the little bee. Ascend, ascend, I say, to the paradise of charity, to the 'depths of your heart,'¹ for, behold, he whom you seek is exalted. [... You should not] curtail your embrace of this Paradise [i.e., your soul, where God lives], but you should like a bee fly into each flower [i.e., wound of Christ] and lick each petal. [...] 'Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation'² in the manner of the little bee, who while flying makes a continual buzz and is only silent when he enters a flower, where he gathers and sucks the sweet honey for which he has longed so much.

NOTES: ¹ Psalm 64[63]:6[7].

² Psalm 51[50]:12[14].

—Saint Bonaventure (ca. 1217–74), Franciscan; Bishop and Doctor of the Church. *The Mystical Vine (Vitis Mystica): A Treatise on the Passion of Our Lord* (London: A. R. Mowbray, 1955), chap. 24. From the saint's Spiritual Works.

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