

**The first major address to the emperor (Lact. inst. 1,1,13-16)**

(13) Quod opus nunc nominis tui auspicio inchoamus, Constantine imperator maxime, qui primus Romanorum principum repudiatis erroribus maiestatem dei singularis ac ueri et cognouisti et honorasti. Nam cum dies ille felicissimus orbi terrarum inluxisset, quo te deus summus ad beatum imperii columnen evexit, salutarem universis et optabilem principatum praeclaro initio auspicatus es, cum eversam sublatam que iustitiam reducens taeterrimum aliorum facinus expiasti. (14) Pro quo facto dabit tibi deus felicitatem uirtutem diuturnitatem, ut eadem iustitia, qua iuuenis exorsus es, gubernaculum rei publicae etiam senex teneas tuisque liberis ut ipse a patre accepisti tutelam Romani nominis tradas. (15) nam malis, qui adhuc aduersus iustos in aliis terrarum partibus saeuiunt, quanto serius tanto uehementius idem omnipotens mercedem sceleris exsoluet, quia ut est erga pios indulgentissimus pater, sic aduersus impios seuerissimus iudex. (16) cuius religionem cultumque diuinum cupiens defendere quem potius appellem, quem adloquar nisi eum, per quem rebus humanis iustitia et sapientia restituta est?

(13) This work we now begin under the sign of your name, greatest Emperor Constantine, who was the first among the Roman rulers to reject heresies and thereby recognised and accordingly honoured the sublimity of the one and true God. For when that day blessed with supreme happiness dawned upon the earth, when the supreme God raised thee to the blessed summit of power, thou began thy reign, salutary and desirable to all, with an excellent prelude, bringing back justice destroyed and done away with, and atoning for the profoundly shameful misdeed of others. (14) For this deed God will grant you happiness, strength and a long life, so that with the same righteousness with which you began as a young man you may still hold the helm of the state as an old man and hand over to your children the care of Romanism as you yourself received it from your father. (15) For the wicked, who still rage against the righteous in other parts of the earth, the same Almighty will the later, the more decisively bestow the reward for their crime. For although he is a very lenient father to the pious, he is a most strict judge of the unpious. (16) Whom should I call upon, whom should I address, in my intention to defend its religion and worship as God, rather than him through whom righteousness and wisdom have been restored to mankind?

### **The second major address to the emperor (Lact. inst. 7,26,11-17)**

(11) Sed omnia iam, sanctissime imperator, figmenta sopita sunt, ex quo te deus summus ad restituendum iustitiae domicilium et ad tutelam generis humani excitauit. quo gubernante Romanae rei publicae statum iam cultores dei pro sceleratis ac nefariis non habemur, iam emergente atque inlustrata ueritate non arguimur ut iniusti qui opera iustitiae facere conamur. nemo iam nobis dei nomen exprobrat, nemo inreligiosus ulterius appellatur, qui soli omnium religiosi sumus, quoniam contemptis imaginibus mortuorum uiuum colimus et uerum deum. (12) te prouidentia summae diuinitatis ad fastigium principale prouexit, qui posses uera pietate aliorum male consulta rescindere, peccata corrigere, saluti hominum paterna clementia prouidere, ipsos denique malos a re publica submouere, quos summa potestate deiectos in manus tuas idem deus tradidit, ut esset omnibus clarum quae sit uera maiestas. (13) illi enim, qui ut impias religiones defenderent, caelestis (ac) singularis dei cultum tollere uoluerunt, profligati iacent, tu autem, qui nomen eius defendis et diligis, uirtute ac felicitate praepollens immortalibus tuis gloriis beatissime frueris. (14) illi poenas sceleris sui et pendunt et pependerit, te dextera dei potens ab omnibus periculis protegit, tibi quietum tranquillumque moderamen cum summa omnium gratulatione largitur. (15) nec immerito rerum dominus ac rector te potissimum delegit, per quem sanctam religionem

(11) But all these spins of lies, exalted emperor, have already fallen asleep since the supreme God called you to restore the abode of justice and to protect the human race. For since you have determined the destiny of the Roman state, we worshippers of God are no longer considered criminals and wrongdoers and, since the truth has already appeared and been illuminated, we are no longer accused of being unrighteous who try to do the works of righteousness. No one reproaches us any longer with the name of God, no one of us is called unbelieving any longer, who are the only ones of all who believe, because we despise the images of dead gods and worship the living and true God. (12) You have been raised to the pinnacle of imperial power by the providence of the supreme Deity, so that in true piety you may abolish the bad precepts of others, rectify their errors, provide for the salvation of men in the mildness inherited from your father, and finally remove from the state system the bad men themselves, whom the same God, after overthrowing them from the supreme power, has delivered into your hands, so that it may be clear to all which is the true sovereignty. (13) For those who, in order to defend the godless religions, wanted to do away with the worship of the heavenly and only God, lie stretched on the ground, but you, who defend and esteem His name, excelling in virtue and happiness, may enjoy in complete bliss your everlasting glories. (14) Those suffer and have suffered the punishment for their crime, you are protected by the mighty right hand of God from all dangers, it gives you a quiet and peaceful reign with the greatest applause of all. (15) And it was not without reason that the Lord and Controller of Fortunes

suam restauraret, quoniam unus ex omnibus extitisti qui praecipua uirtutis et sanctitatis exempla praeberes, quibus antiquorum principum gloriam, quos tamen fama inter bonos numerat, non modo aequares, sed etiam, quod est maximum, praeterires. (16) illi quidem natura fortasse tantum similes iustis fuerunt. qui enim moderatorem uniuersitatis deum ignorat, similitudinem iustitiae adsequi potest, ipsam uero non potest. (17) tu uero et morum ingenita sanctitate et ueritatis et dei agnitione in omni actu iustitiae opera consummas. erat igitur congruens, ut in formando generis humani statu te auctore ac ministro diuinitas uteretur. cui nos cottidianis precibus supplicamus, ut te in primis, quem rerum custodem uoluit esse, custodiat, deinde inspiret tibi uoluntatem, qua semper in amore diuini nominis perseueres, quod est omnibus salutare et tibi ad felicitatem, ceteris ad quietem.

chose you as the one through whom he should restore his holy religion, because you were the only one of all who stood out, who gave outstanding examples of virtue and holiness, through which you not only attained the fame of the ancient emperors, whom tradition already counts among the good, but even, what is greatest, surpassed it. (16) Those, of course, were perhaps so much like the righteous by their nature. For he who does not know the controller of the universe, God, can attain a likeness to righteousness, but not righteousness itself. (17) But you, through your innate sublimity of character and through your knowledge of truth and God, perform works of righteousness in every action. It was only logical, then, that in shaping the human condition, Deity should use you as executor and at the same time as servant. In our daily prayers we implore it to first of all guard you, who according to its will are the guardian of all things, and then to fill you with the will by which you always remain in love for the divine name, which is beneficial to all, and indeed to you for happiness and to the rest for peace.