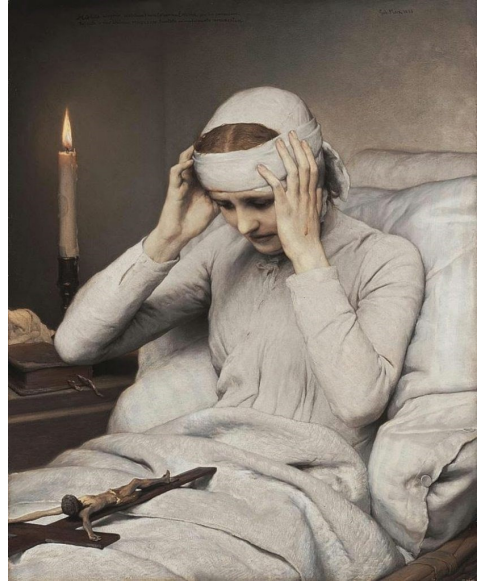


Vision of Hell—Blessed Anne Catherine Emmerich

“Deep groans and cries of despair might be plainly distinguished even while the doors were tightly closed; but, O, who can describe the dreadful yells and shrieks which burst upon the ear when the bolts were unfastened and the doors flung open; and, O, who can depict the melancholy appearance of the inhabitants of this wretched place! [...]



“[A]ll within it is, on the contrary, close, confused, and crowded; every object tends to fill the mind with sensations of pain and grief; the marks of the wrath and vengeance of God are visible everywhere; despair, like a vulture, gnaws every heart, and discord and misery reign around. [...] In the city of Hell nothing is to be seen but dismal dungeons, dark caverns, frightful deserts, fetid swamps filled with every imaginable species of poisonous and disgusting reptile. [...]

“[I]n Hell, perpetual scenes of wretched discord, and every species of sin and corruption, either under the most horrible forms imaginable, or represented by different kinds of dreadful torments. All in this dreary abode tends to fill the mind with horror; not a word of comfort is heard or a consoling idea admitted; the one tremendous thought, that the justice of an all-powerful God inflicts on the damned nothing but what they have fully deserved is the absorbing tremendous conviction which weighs down each heart.

“Vice appears in its own, grim disgusting colors, being stripped of the mask under which it is hidden in this world, and the infernal viper is seen devouring those who have cherished or fostered it here below. In a word, Hell is the temple of anguish and despair...”