122 Alms (*Elemosina*)

Alms. Concerning the nature of this, note that alms are threefold.

First, it consists in contrition of the heart by which one offers himself lamenting to God, Eccli. 30[:24]: “Have pity on your own soul, pleasing God.” For a gift does not please an enemy like a friend, nor does a dish of food please in a dirty vessel. The example is of Master Philip, Chancellor of Paris,[[1]](#endnote-1) Eccli. 31[:8, 11]: “Blessed is the rich man that is found without blemish,” etc., up to “shall declare his alms.” Nor does offering from duty please, but on the other hand duty because of offering. The example is in Abel whose gifts of a pennyworth would not have pleased except he had pleased before, [Gen. 4:4]. Wherefore Augustine, in *Enchiridion,[[2]](#endnote-2)* he who wishes to give alms in order, he ought to begin with himself. For just as it is said in Eccli. 14[:5]: “He that is evil to himself, to whom will he be good?” Again Augustine,[[3]](#endnote-3) what is more miserable than a miserable man being miserable to another and not to himself?

Second, it consists in the compassion of Christ, Job 31[:18]: “From my infancy mercy grew up with me.”

¶ Third, it consists in bestowing by hand or in any kind of bestowing or in whatever benefice mercifully expended, Luke 11[:41]: “Give alms; and behold, all things are clean unto you.” But in Dist. 45, c. *Tria*,[[4]](#endnote-4) it is said that some alms are temporal as to give what you can for God from your belongings.

¶ Others are spiritual as to send away him by which you are harmed.

The third is penal as to chide the delinquent.

But alms are sevenfold,[[5]](#endnote-5) that is, consisting in seven things, just as it is evident in two verses containing the works of mercy. First,[[6]](#endnote-6) as far as the corporal alms: I visit, I give drink, I feed, I ransom, I clothe, I harbor, I bury.

Second,[[7]](#endnote-7) as far as spiritual alms the other seven are contained: counsel, admonish, comfort, forgive, bear, pray, and instruct.

¶ Wherefore in the giving of alms, thirteen things are to be considered. Measure, so that not everything would be given to one person, Psal. [111:9]: “He has distributed, he has given to the poor.”

Second, quality of persons, because first give to the just, then to the sinners, in so far as they are men and brothers.

Third, faith, so that first it may be given to one familiar of the faith.

Fourth, time, because in time of indigency, it is better to give before death than after death, Eccli. 14[:13]: “Do good to your friend before you die,” that is, your soul or Christ in his members, Eccli. 17[:18]: “The alms of a man is as a signet with him.” And well he speaks with him, because if he comes after him he is in peril, just as a pack horse of another lord when he comes after him, often he goes out of his way lest it be despoiled, and then the lord would be badly treated. So, the goods as legacies often go elsewhere after death than the testator intended, because often the heirs or the executor care little, Eccli. 3[:15]: “The relieving of the father shall not be forgotten,” etc. Therefore, Jacob said concerning his brother, Gen. 32[:20], when he would be found toward his land, because he had offended him: “I will appease him with the presents that go before.” Because is it not your case now of finding toward the land of our brother Christ whom even we have offended in many things. Therefore, we avoid pleasing him now with gifts which go before us.

¶ Fifth, that close relationship or necessity is required, because it is better that you support yours by which I consider requiring a subsidy.

Sixth is the cause, because you ought not to give on account of human health, but on account of fraternal sustenance, Dist., 86, c. *Non satis.[[8]](#endnote-8)* And Matt. 6[:3]: “When you do alms, let not your left hand know what your right hand does,” that is, do not know an evil intention, such that of vain glory or avarice, what the right hand does of good works. Wherefore Jerome, *Epistle* 35,[[9]](#endnote-9) there are those who give to the poor, so that they may be more accepted; and under alms they seek riches, which are more to be called hunting than alms.

¶ Seventh is the place, as if the just man is tortured in prison.

Eighth is the age, because rather it is to be given to the old who cannot help themselves.

Ninth is debility, because to the impotent it is rather for succoring the fallen or unfortunate, so that if one without his fault falls into want. The shame of the powerful, because some are more embarrassed to seek help because of nobility of birth, or propriety of the matter, because one ought to ask of his own not of another, Causa 1, quest. 1, c. *Non est putanda.[[10]](#endnote-10)* Because justly it is written [Isai. 61:8]: “I am the Lord that loves judgment and hates robbery in a holocaust.” Indigence, because it is nothing other than to waste to give to those abounding, that is, as if a poor shepherd of the alms which he collects ought to make alms if he can and he has over and above.

¶ Again, to the aforesaid ought to be added that some persons ought not to give alms indiscriminately. And these are noted in C. 23., q. 4, [c. 35][[11]](#endnote-11) because it is said as if the wife, the monk, the son, or the family member were excommunicated.

Again, to some persons alms are not to be given indiscriminately, such as the rich, the excommunicated, the enemies of the church, unless in cases where he can if they are in need up to death, because in extreme necessity it is to be given to all, Dist. 42, c. *Quiescamus*.[[12]](#endnote-12) If however that giving becomes the occasion of evil, that giving is to be subtracted. If, however alms are not enough for all, the just man is to be preferred. Wherefore it is to be known that there is an immunity of alms, so that daily there is not much to be cared to whom it is given, so long as one appears poor. But in greater alms the more worthy is to be preferred, the needier, and to whom you are more bound.

¶ Again, note that of our superfluity what is over is beyond necessity so one should make alms according to that of Luke 11[:41]: “But yet that which remains, give alms,” but not to give of things necessary to oneself, unless in extreme necessity. Wherefore it is said in Tob. 4[:7]: “Give alms out of your substance.” The reason and cause of this is assigned in Tob. 12[:9]: “For alms deliver from death, and the same is that which purges away sins, and makes to find mercy and life everlasting.” Nor is it a wonder if its efficacy is so great, for in the last judgment there will be only the debate about alms and the works of mercy, Matt. 25[:35]. Therefore, Daniel counseled king Nabugodonosor, Dan. 4[:24]: “Redeem your sins with alms.” The example for this is in Act. 10[:1], concerning Cornelius who merited grace with his alms, so that he might come to the faith which is to be understood in disposition not in production, such as making suitable, making apt, or preparing for grace. Although he was not sufficient of himself, just as a fire softening wax disposes it for the reception of the seal and impression. And sometimes the king prohibits money to be carried out of the kingdom, placing in the exits those who scrutinize those going out, because the prudent merchant noticing this gives over his money to the faithful poor for carrying, about whom there is no suspicion. And thus, he finds it afterwards, so when it is prohibited that none of us carries riches with him from this life, Job 27[:19]: “The rich man when he shall sleep shall take away nothing with him.” Let it be handed over to the poor and afterwards we will find it.

¶ Here also note that God rather made the rich because of helping the poor, than the poor because of the rich. For it does better to be poor than rich in acquiring for himself eternal life, than to be rich than poor for bestowing upon himself temporal subsistence. Wherefore it is said in Prov. 19[:17]: “He that has mercy on the poor, lend to the Lord.”

¶ Therefore what is more useful than alms which do not desert the giver when they desert the one retaining them. In that one to whom it is given want is relieved, nakedness is covered, in him who gives it expels fault.

¶ Again, some would have it that alms are better than fasting, because what fasting subtracts, alms add. Sometimes what fasting subtracts from the will it puts back in cupidity.

Again, alms descend to our neighbor as a benefit, and ascend to God through merit. Nor can anyone pretend from the scarcity of things. For there, good will suffices. Wherefore Tob. [4:8-9]: “According to your ability be merciful. If you have much give abundantly.”

¶ On account of the aforesaid alms are compared to good seed[[13]](#endnote-13) on account of six things. First, because it ought to be hidden, Eccli. 29[:15]: “Shut up alms in the heart of the poor.”

Second, because it seems to be lost when it is cast forth, when it is best preserved, Eccli. 29[:13]: “Lose your money for your brother.”

Third,[[14]](#endnote-14) because with profit also interest grows, Prov. 19[:17]: “He that hath mercy on the poor, lend to the Lord.” *Gloss*,[[15]](#endnote-15) one hundred-fold will be returned.

Fourth,[[16]](#endnote-16) because certainly seed is held back sometimes for cold therefore it yields more abundantly, Psal. [125:6]: “Going they went and wept, casting their seeds. But coming they shall come with joyfulness, carrying their sheaves.”

Fifth,[[17]](#endnote-17) because it should be committed to the good person only, such are the poor.

Sixth,[[18]](#endnote-18) because they ought to be sowed in the earth not seeded, that is, among the needy, Eccli. 8[:15]: “Lend not to a man that is mightier than yourself: and if you lend, count it as lost.” Wherefore Gregory,[[19]](#endnote-19) by serving earthly matters we lose, giving to the poor we save.

Seventh,[[20]](#endnote-20) because we sow from the front not from the back. So, a man ought to send out his alms in advance while he lives and not after death by handing them over to the executors. Where note it is narrated just as it is treated in the book of nature. Wherefore the verse:[[21]](#endnote-21)

¶ Your friends will live as long as you, and with you they die; / Your death makes those forget whom your life kept as your friends. / Do well while you live, if you wish to live after death, / When life is done, done is your friend as well.

¶ Wherefore the alms giver is just like the gardener,[[22]](#endnote-22) who when he cuts back a tree from its superfluities, so much the more it bears fruit, Luke 11[:41]: “That which remains, give alms.” And just like the gardener tolerates among his vines some unfruitful trees, such as the elm, the alder, and the willow, so certainly as the vices support, so God in the church tolerates the impious rich for sustaining the poor, Matt. 21[:33]: “There was a man who planted a vineyard … and let it out to husbandmen.”

And[[23]](#endnote-23) just as the householder makes to send his sons to be attacked, so that thus he may better nourish his son, so God appoints some so that he may feed his sons the poor.

¶ Again,[[24]](#endnote-24) the almsgiver is just like the industrious merchant who hands over his money to these who can return it and to these who are about to go to the market days, namely, paradise, not however to the actors who never can return it, Eccli. 12[:6]: “Do good to the humble and give not to the ungodly.” And just as a toll is not sought from these who cross empty, so Christ does not seek a toll of alms from the poor but from the loaded rich, [1] Tim. 6[:17-18]: “Charge the rich of this world … to give easily.”

¶ Again,[[25]](#endnote-25) in the giving of alms three things are to be considered:

who seeks;

¶ for what he seeks;

through whom he seeks.

As for the first, God himself seeks in his poor, Matt. 25[:40], because “you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me.” And therefore if the poor are refused, it is to be feared lest the rich refuse others of the kingdom, Prov. 21[:13]: “He that stops his ear against the cry of the poor, shall also cry himself and shall not be heard.” Wherefore Augustine, *De verbis Domini*, sermon 5,[[26]](#endnote-26) give to me out of that which I have given to you. I seek of my own, give and I will return. Have you had me as a dispenser, therefore make me a debtor. Wherefore someone says thus, Do what Christ loves when the poor cry to the offering. Distribute to him what he gave to you before.

As for the second,[[27]](#endnote-27) note that God seeks for what is his. Therefore, he is an ingrate who denies, 1 Paral. 29[:14]: “All things are yours, Lord: and we have given you what we received of your hand.”

As for the third,[[28]](#endnote-28) note that God does not seek from us for giving or for retaining, but for lending a hundredfold, Prov. 19[:17]: “He that has mercy on the poor, lends to the Lord.”

¶ Again, in making alms four causes ought to concur. First, the efficient cause, as it should be clean, otherwise not, as was said above.

The material cause, as it should be congruent and this doubly. In order that it may be seen from where it comes, because the poor are not rich. For what is put into a full vessel is wasted, the arid land lacking a sprinkling will not be fruitful, Eccli. 4[:1]: “Defraud not the poor of alms.”

Third, the due form is required which is double. That it take place quickly, lest the things to be given by chance be corrupted, and thus the merit of the giving one is lessened, Job. 31[:16]: “If I have … made the eyes of the widow wait.” Second, that it be done hidden, Matt. 6[:2]: “When you do an alms deed, sound not a trumpet,” etc.

About the final cause, utility occurs many ways and as far as to this life and as far as to the future, for past sins are to be emended, Dan. 4[:24]: “Redeem your sins with alms.” He speaks of the future just as water blocks the fire lest it proceed, Eccli. 3[:33]: “Water quenches a flaming fire, and alms resist sins.” For the contrary is cupidity.

Second, as far as the future, alms bestow trust, Tob. 4[:12]: “Alms shall be a great confidence before the highest God.” Again, they liberate from death, Tob. 4[:11]: “Alms deliver from all sin, and from death.”

¶ Again, four conditions for advancing alms are noted in that authority, Isai. [58:7]: “Deal your bread to the hungry.” First, how it is to be given, because in a way separated. Therefore, he says “deal,” as if he says, Do not give the whole indifferently, just as the prodigal does, nor retain the whole just as the avaricious does, but in giving retain what is to be retained, just as the virtuous bestower. Again, Do not give all to one, but give to different ones. In the example of Christ, Mark 6[:41], who “broke the bread, and gave to his disciples, to set before” the crowd, but alas, because in Lamen. 4[:4], it is said, “The little ones have asked for bread, and there was none to break it unto them.”

Second, to whom it is to be given, namely to the needy person, which is noted there many were hungry, just as the asses are readier to urinate in the water and in the wet earth, than on the dry land, because they give to the rich and not to the needy. Against which Christ did, as it is said in Matt. 25[:42]: “I was hungry, and you gave me not to eat.”

Third, what is to be given, because good bread is expedient there, Gen. 18[:5]: “I will set a morsel of bread and strengthen your heart.”

Fourth, from what is to be given, because from one’s own, which is noted there, as yours, Prov. 3[:9]: “Honor the Lord with your substance.” This is against the robbers who from another’s hide make long thongs. And it is to be noted here that according to the law of charity, the rich are held to support the poor, just as on the other hand the poor are held to pray to the Lord for the rich. Wherefore the Apostle, Gal. [6:2]: “Bear one another's burdens.” Note here that it is narrated when the blind man being able to walk should carry, and the lame being able to see should point out the way for distribution. Thus, morally the rich who are morally blind in spiritual matters are held to support the poor, who as if seeing clearly in spiritual matters are held to guide the rich. Wherefore says Gregory, *Moralia* 18,[[29]](#endnote-29) it is expeditious to give alms. For earthly matters which we lose by saving, we save by bestowing. For a long time, we cannot be with these things, because either we will leave them by dying, or they will leave us while we are living.

¶ Again, Augustine,[[30]](#endnote-30) what will happen to those who not only refuse alms, but also despoil the poor so that they may build their houses? Against such ones Hugh of St. Victor says,[[31]](#endnote-31) they despoil the poor so that they may clothe the stones, the painted wall depicts Trojan acts and an old friend is denied to the Christian.

1. *The Westminster Handbook to Medieval Theology,*  By James R. Ginther (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), pp. 150-151. Philip the Chancellor championed the masters in Paris, brought them back from their exile in Orleans, and gained places for the friars. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Augustine, *Enchiridion* 76 (PL 40:268): Qui enim vult ordinate dare eleemosynam, a se ipso debet incipere, et eam sibi primum dare*.* [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Augustine, *Confessiones* 1.13.21 (PL 32:670): Quid enim miserius misero non miserante seipsum [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Decretum, Distinctio 45, c. 12: Tria sunt genera elemosinarum: una corporalis, egenti dare quicquid poteris: altera spiritualis, dimittere a quo lesus fueris; tercia, delinquentem corrigere, et errantes in uiam ducere ueritatis. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* IIª-IIae, q. 32, a. 2, arg. 1: Ponuntur enim septem eleemosynae corporales, scilicet pascere esurientem, potare sitientem, vestire nudum, recolligere hospitem, visitare infirmum, redimere captivum, et sepelire mortuum; quae in hoc versu continentur, visito, poto, cibo, redimo, tego, colligo, condo. Ponuntur etiam aliae septem eleemosynae spirituales, scilicet docere ignorantem, consulere dubitanti, consolari tristem, corrigere peccantem, remittere offendenti, portare onerosos et graves, et pro omnibus orare; quae etiam in hoc versu continentur, consule, castiga, solare, remitte, fer, ora; ita tamen quod sub eodem intelligatur consilium et doctrina. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Cf. *Fasiculus morum* 5.22 (pp. 528-529): Et nota secundum quod habetur *Summa confessorum*, libro 3, titulo “De hospitalitate ordinandorum,” questione 2, et accipitur a Thoma in *Summa*, questione 32.... Unde versus: Visito, poto, cibo, redimo, tego, colligo, condo.

   And according to the *Summa for Confessors*, book 3, under the title “On the hospitality of people who are to be ordanined,” quetion 2 (and this is taken from Thomas’s *Summa*, question 32).... Hence the verse: I visit, feed, give drink, redeem, clothe, shelter, bury. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Cf. *Fasciculus morum* 5.22 (pp. 528-529): Unde versus: Consule, castiga, solare, remitte, fer, ora.

   Hence the verse: Counsel, punish, console, forgive, support, and pray. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Decretum, Distinctio 86, c. 14: [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Jerome, *Epistola* 52.9 (PL 22:535): Sunt qui pauperibus paulum tribuunt, ut amplius accipiant; et sub praetextu eleemosynae quaerunt divitias, quae magis venatio appellanda est, quam eleemosynae genus. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Decretum, Causa 1, quest. 1, c. 27. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Decretum, Causa 23, quest. 4, c. 35. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Decretum, Distinctio 42, c. 2. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaeta Salutis* 2.7 (8:273a): Est insuper eleemosyna sicut semen; et nota quod sex sunt quibus eleemosyna bene semini comparatur: primo, q uia sicut seven debet abscondi, ita eleemosyna debewt occulte dari: nam dicitur: *Conclude eleemosynam in sinu pauperis*. Secundo, quia sicut semen videtur perdi, cum tamen potius renovetur; sic eleemosyna videtur amitti, cum datur, quae tamen tunc optime servatur, et thesaurizatur in thesauro Paradisi. Unde dicitur sic: *Perde pecuniam propter fratrem*. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaeta Salutis* 2.7 (8:273a): Tertio, semen cum foenore surgit: sic qui dat eleemosynam, a Deo centupulum accipiet. Unde super illu8d: *Faenertur Domino, qui miseretur proximo,* dicit Glossa: “Centuplum accepturus.” [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. *Glossa ordinaria* on Matthew 19:29 (PL 114:149): Centuplum. Id est, qui carnalia pro Domino dimiserit, spiritualia accipiet quae comparatione et merito sui ita erunt, quasi parvo numero centenarius comparetur. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaeta Salutis* 2.7 (8:273b): Quinto, sicut semen gelu pressum et retardatum profest uberiorem fructum; sic eleemosyna quam quis facit dum sustinet tribulationem, uberiorem est habitura repromissionem, seu fructum, vel remunerationem. Unde dicitur: *Euntes ibant et flebant mittentes semina sua. Venientes autem,* etc. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. *Fasciculus morum* 5.23 (pp. 534-535): Et primo quia ad modum boni seminis debet terre bone et convenienti, id est bonis pauperibus, commendari, iuxta illud Thobie: “Vade, adduc amicos de tribu nostra timentes Deum, ut epulentur nobiscum.”....

    First, like good see they must be entrusted to good and fitting soil, that is, to the deserving poor, according to Tobit: “Go and bring friends from our tribe that fear God, to feast with us.”.... [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. *Fasciculus morum* 5.23 (pp. 534-535): Secundo, ad modum seminis debet esse elemosina in terra non seminata seminari, scilicet inter pauperes et non inter divites; Ecclesiastici 8: “Noli fenerari homini diciori te, quia si feceris quasi perditum habes.” ... Quia secundum beatum Gregorium terrena servando amittimus, set pauperibus largiendo servamus. ...

    Second, like seed, alms must be sown in land that has not been seeded before, that is to say, among the poor, not the righ; Ecclesiasticus 8: “Do not lend to a man who is richer than yourself; if you do so, count it as lost.” ... For according to Blessed Gregory, by trying to keep earthly goods we lose them, but by giving them to the poor we keep them. ... [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. Gregory, *Moralia* 18.18.28 (PL 76:52): Bona temporalia nobis servando amittimus, pauperibus erogando servamus. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. *Fasciculus morum* 5.24 (pp. 540-541): Tercio comparatur elemosina semini quia sicut semen ante oculos seminantis seminatur et non a tergo, sic homo ante oculos suos bebet elemosiname facere et non a tergo confidendo nimis in parentibus relictis et executoribus. ...

    Alms can be compared to seed for a third reason: just as seed is sown in front of the sower and at his back, so must a person give alms in front of himself and not at his back by relying too much on his relatives, successors, and executors. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Cf. *Fasciculus Morum* 5.24 (p. 544): Dum vivis vivunt, moriens moriuntur amici, / Mors facit immemores quos vita tenebat amicos. / Post mortis morsum vertit dilectio dorsum. / Finita vita, finit amicus ita.

    Your friends will live as long as you, and with you they die; / Your death makes those forget whom your life kept as your friends. / After the bite of death their love turns its back on you. / When life is done, done is your friends as well. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaeta Salutis* 2.7 (8:273b): Item eleemosynarius est sicut arbor, quae fructum facit; sicut nutrix, quae puerum nutrit, et sicut mercator, qui merces vendit. Est itaque bonus eleemosynarius ut arbor: sicut enim arbor melius crescit et fructificat, cum ab ea resecantur superflua; sic divite4s melius proficiunt in gratia, resecantes divitias suas, scilicet dando eleemosynam, quae est de superfluis danda, vel facienda, sicut dicitur: *Quod superest, date eleemosynam*. Et sicut agricola tolerat in vinea aliquas infuctuosas arbores, quae sustinent vites; sic sumus agricola Deus in vinea sua, scilicet in Ecclesia tolert multos divites, qui cum eorum eleemosyna sustentant pauperes. Unde dicitur: *Vneam pastinavit homo*. In vinea siquidem non solum sunt vites, quae fructificant, imo et paxilli aridi.... [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaeta Salutis* 2.7 (8:273b): Homo etiam eleemosynarius est sicut nutrix, quae lactat puerum: nam sicut nutrices consueverunt impinguari, ut abundent in lacte, et bene nutriant pueros; sic Dominus impinguat divites bonis temporalibus, ut abundent in lacte compassionis, et nutriant filios, id est pauperest suos. ... [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaeta Salutis* 2.7 (8:274a): Est insuper homo eleemosynarius sicut mercator industrius. Nam sicut mercatores pecuniam suam non tradunt eis qui reddere non possunt, vel eis qui ad nundinas venturi non sunt; sic homo prudens non dat eleemosynam histrionibus, qui nihil habent, scilicet de gratia Dei, et qui venturi non sunt ad nundinas paradisi. Ideo dicitur: *Benefac humili, et ne dederis impio*. Hoc vero in duobus casibus intelligitur: unus, quando datur histrionibus non intuitu pietatis, sed ratione histrionatus; alius est, se credas quod, propter eleemosynam tuam, impius ngligat justitiam. Et sicut pedagium non petitur ab illis qui transeunt vacui, sed ab aliis qui sunt onerati; sic Dominus pedagium eleemosynae non petit a pauperibus, qui sunt vacui rebus transitoriis; sed a divitibus, qui sunt onerati divitiis, et pleni temporalibus bonis. Unde dicit Apostolus: *Divitibus hujus saeculi praec ipe, facile tribuere, communicare, thesaurizare sibi fundamentum in futurum.*... [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaeta Salutis* 2.7 (8:274a): Secundo eleemosyna habet motum stimulantem, et specialiter triplicem. Unde nota, quod ille, a quo petitur eleemosyna, debet praecipue considerare tria, scilicet: quis petit, pro quo petit; et ad quid petit. Primo igitur, quando pauper petit eleemosynam, debet dives considerare quis eam petit: quia Dominus, pro cujus amore petit eam mendicus. Debet enim adeo diligere pauperes, quod quidquid fit eis propter amorem suum, reputat sibi factum. Nam dicitur: *Quod uni ex minimis meis fecistis, mihi fecistis*. Petit ergo eleemosynam per pauperem suum ille, a quo dives petit quandoque regnum: et ideo cum pauperi negat dives modicum fructum panis, timere debet, quod Deus non audiat eum, cum petit ab eo regnum aeternae felicitatis, quia dicitur: *Qui obturat aures suas ad clamorem pauperis, clamabit ipse, et non audietur*. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Augustine, *Sermo De scripturis* 123.5.5 (PL 38:686): Da mihi ex eo quod dedi tibi. Quid enim attulisti, quando huc venisti? Omnia quae creavi, creatus hic invenisti: nihil attulisti, nihil hinc tolles. De meo mihi quare non donas? Quia tu plenus es, et pauper inanis est. Primordia vestra attendite: ambo nudi nati estis. Et tu ergo nudus natus es. Multa hic invenisti: numquid tecum aliquid attulisti? De meo quaero: da, et reddo. Habuisti me largitorem, fac cito debitorem. Parum est quod dixi, Habuisti me largitorem, fac me debitorem: habeam te feneratorem. Pauca mihi das, plura reddam. Terrena mihi das, coelestia reddam. Temporalia mihi das, aeterna restituam. Te ipsum tibi reddam, quando te mihi reddidero. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaeta Salutis* 2.7 (8:274a-b): Debet secundo considerare dives, quid petit Deus, quando eleemosynam petit in suis pauperibus: petit enim Deus non nostrum, sed suum. Ideo valde ingratus est Deo, qui pauperi negat modicam eleemosynam, cum de bonis Dei habeat abundanter ad mensam suam. Hoc consideravit David, qui dicit: *Tu sunt, Domine, omnia, et quae de tua manu accepimus, dedimus tibi.* [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaeta Salutis* 2.7 (8:274b): Tertio, debet considerare dives homo, qd quid petit Deus, Deus enim petit non ad dandum, sed at mutuandum; nec tantum at riplas, imo ad centuplas usuras. Unde dicit Augustinus: “Homo, quod foeneras homini, foenerare Deo, et centuplum accipies, et vitam aeternam possidebis.” [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. Gregory, *Moralia* 18.18.28 (PL 76:42): Nam terrena omnia quae servando amittimus, largiendo servamus; patrimoniumque nostrum retentum perditur, manet erogatum. Diu enim cum rebus nostris durare non possumus, quia aut nos illas moriendo deserimus, aut illae nos viventes quasi deserunt pereundo. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. Cf. Augustine, *De Tobiae* 4 (PL 34:969): Ex substantia tua fac eleemosynam, et noli avertere faciem tuam ab ullo paupere: ita enim fiet, ut nec a te avertatur facies Domini. Quo modo potueris, ita esto misericors. Si multum tibi fuerit, abundanter tribue: si exiguum fuerit, etiam exiguum libenter impertire stude. Praemium enim tibi bonum thesaurizas in die necessitatis. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. Hugh of St. Victor cf. Hugh de Folieto, *De claustro animo* 1 (PL 176:1019): Trojanos gestat paries pictus purpura, et auro vestitos, Christianis panni negantur veteres. Graecorum exercitui dantur arma, Hectori clypeus datur auro splendens, pauperi vero ad januam clamanti non porrigitur panis, et, ut verum fatear, pauperes spoliantur saepe, et vestiuntur lapides, et ligna. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)