273 Shepherd or To Feed (*Pastor uel Pascere*)

Since food is triple: Material, about which in Matt. [4:4]: “Not in bread alone does man live.” Sacramental, about which in John 6[:56]: “For my flesh is meat indeed.” Doctrinal, about which Eccli. [15:3]: “With the bread of life and understanding, she shall feed him.” By these three ways we ought to feed the hungry, namely, with food from the light of nature, about which the Apostle [Rom. 12:20]: “If your enemy be hungry, give him to eat.”

Second, in the sacrament of the Eucharist and the teaching of scripture. Thence it is that Christ said that to Peter, John [21:17]: “Feed my sheep.”

¶ Although all the apostles are honored according to that of Psal. [138:17]: “Your friends, O God, are made exceedingly honorable.” However, Peter among others because of the faith and charity particularly merited to be honored. Because of faith he received the keys, because of charity he received the sheep. For before the commission of the keys, he asked him about his faith. You however say who I am, before the commissioning of all things he asked concerning charity, saying, [John 21:17]: “Peter, do you love me?”

¶ Concerning these things which Christ fixed, because among the virtues, faith is first. Since it is the foundation, the beginning. And charity is the special one, since it is the roof, the completion, and the consummation, about which it is said that “it shall cover a multitude of sins,” James [5:20]. Nor ought the keys be committed to anyone than a faithful one, nor ought the sheep be handed over to anyone than a loving one. But by inquiring concerning faith which he fixed once, because there is one faith, but by inquiring concerning charity he asked three times, because from charity three things ought to be loved: God himself, man and one’s neighbor. Or certainly because Peter denied him three times out of fear, three times he confessed out of love. But note here that that he held himself more cautious in judging because never did he deny for he divided doubt and held certain with himself none more than others, but simply he affirmed that he loved Christ. Therefore, the office of the pastor is to feed and love the flock, 1 Pet. 5[:2]: “Feed the flock of God which is among you.” And John 21[:16]: “If you love me … Feed my lambs.” In the sign of this Moses first fed his flock in the desert where he was made a prelate over the people of God, Exod. 3[:1]. Wherefore the Lord says, Jer. 3[:15]: “I will give you pastors according to my own heart, and they shall feed you with knowledge and doctrine.”

¶ Again, note here what Algazel says,[[1]](#endnote-1) that the shepherd is not more noble than the sheep, in this that the shepherd is a dog who is viler than a sheep. He can be a shepherd of all but in this that a man as a shepherd has some things by condition better than a sheep, in this he can be called better.

Again, to the Eph. 4[:11] it is said “he gave some apostles,” and it follows, “other some pastors.”

¶ Again Augustine says, *Epistola* 40,[[2]](#endnote-2) here he joined two ideas under the one name so that the office of the pastor may be restored and to relate the teaching. Therefore, the office of the pastor is to acquire sheep not dwellings, to seek out the lost, and to protect and cherish the found.

¶ Again, of a good shepherd the sheep are given to conserve not to pillage, to disperse the wolves, and to know his own sheep from others. In the first the eminence of life shines forth, in the second the evidence of example, in the third the providence of doing. Therefore, the good shepherd judges if he is solicitous in feeding, provident in taking care, faithful in defending. According to which Christ is meritoriously called the good shepherd because he feeds his Church with great diligence, and in seeking out the sheep that are lost, Ezech. 34[:11]: “I myself will seek my sheep.”

Again, because he feeds with great caution by guarding against the spiritual wolves and by dividing one flock from another, Ezech. 34[:22-23]: “I will save my flock, and it shall be no more a spoil,” and it follows, “I will set up on shepherd over them.” Namely by feeding some, gathering some, and lifting some up, according to that of Isai. 40[:11]: “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather together the lambs with his arm.”

Again, concerning this that can be said meritoriously according to John 10[:11]: “I am the good shepherd.”

Again, because all crossing over, according to another similitude they transfer according to the Philosopher, *De tempore*, 3,[[3]](#endnote-3) meritoriously the name of the shepherd is transferred to the prelate because of the similitude of the office. For the shepherd is above the flock which feeds under the lord whom it serves. After some time to whom it succeeds, thus the curate ought to be faithful as much to the flock whom he guides, he ought to be humble as much as to the king whom he serves, docile as much as to the father whom they have had. Therefore, the shepherd ought to guide usefully, not deride scurrilously, nor excoriate through cupidity, nor oppress by cruelty, but to feed wisely.

¶ Again, Gregory in his *Homilia*,[[4]](#endnote-4) at the end of the world it will be shown what each was rewarded. For then Peter with Judea, Paul with the gentiles, Thomas with India they seem to appear. Therefore, when so many shepherds with so many flocks come forth, what shall we say, we who return to the Lord after the business empty handed. We have the name of shepherd, but we hardly show any sheep.

¶ Again, *Super evangelium*, book one, homily 18,[[5]](#endnote-5) we think this is damnable here to receive the reward of labor without labor. And *Moralia*, 22,[[6]](#endnote-6) he eats the fruit without money, who receives ecclesiastical comforts for the use of the body but provides no ministry of exhortation to the people. And it follows, what do we say to these shepherds, if we undertake the office of a crier, but eat the ecclesiastical food being mute. We expel what is owed to our body, but we do not reward what is owed for the health of the subordinates, Jer. 3[:15]: “I will give you pastors according to my own heart, and they shall feed you with knowledge and doctrine.” But also, because now that is fulfilled, 3 Kings last chapter [22:17]: “I saw Israel scattered upon the hills, like sheep that have no shepherd.”

Second, he must guide prudently what is noted when it is said of the sheep, not of the wolves, not of the concubines, not of the actors, but of the subordinates, John 21[:17]: “Feed my sheep.” But alas because today that is fulfilled of Jer. 23[:2]: “The pastors” feed themselves “that feed my people.” [Ezech. 34:7]: “Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord,” etc.

Third, they ought to guide truthfully, which can be noted when it is said we are, we do not appear, we do not take like mercenaries, but we are in truth, John 10[:11]: “I am the good shepherd.” But alas because today that is fulfilled, Zach. 11[:17]: “O shepherd, and idol, that forsakes the flock.”

¶ Again, in priests, pastors, and prelates three things need to be inquired into: that they enter well, that they live well, that they guide well. Wherefore also there is proposed a triple question about those conducting themselves badly, Judges 18[:3] it is said there concerning the priest Michas, “Who brought you hither?” behold the question of his entering. “What do you do here?” behold the question of his coming. “Why would you come hither?” behold the question of his guiding. But to these things he responds, Psal. [78:1]: “O God, the heathens are come into your inheritance,” namely, those not called are entering. “They have defiled your holy temple,” behold the evil living. They have made Jerusalem as a place to keep their fruit,” behold the evil guiding. Therefore, it is said in Wis. 6[:6]: “A most severe judgment shall be for them that bear rule.” Certainly, hard because they have ruled badly.

¶ On the contrary the good curates are commended by the goodness of entering, John 15[:16]: “I have chosen you; and have appointed you, that you should go.” And Heb. 5[:4]: “Neither does any man take the honor to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was.”

Second, by the goodness of living, Psal. [100:6]: “The man that walked in the perfect way, he served me.” And in Psal. [131:9]: “Let your priests be clothed with justice.”

Third, from the goodness of guiding, Psal. [1:1]: “Blessed is the man who has not (walked in the counsel of the ungodly),” and it follows, “nor sat in the chair of pestilence.” And Malach. 2[:7]: “The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge.”

For the remaining matters concerning this material see the chapter [297] Prelate (*Prelatus*).

1. Algazel, *Metaphysics: A Mediaeval Translation* 1.4.3.3 De motu corporum celestium, ed. J. T. Muckle (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies,1933, 1967), (p. 110.5-11): Si quis autem dixerit quod si quicquid queritur propter aliud vilius est eo, tunc pastor vilior est ovibus et magister discipulo, et propheta populo, quoniam pastor non queritur, nisi propter oves, nec magister, nisi propter discipulum, nec propheta, nisi propter informandum populum, dicetur quod pastor vilior est ovibus in hoc quod pastor est, sed nobilior est in hoc quod homo est cuius humanitas in ipso aliud est ab eo quod queritur de eo propter pastoratum tantum;

<https://books.google.com/books?id=o7jBker1U-kC&printsec=frontcover&vq=quicquid+queritur&hl=ca&output=html_text> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. Augustine, *Epistola* 93.9.29 (PL 33:336): Exi tu in vestigiis gregum, non in vestigiis meis, sed in vestigiis gregum; nec unius gregis, sed gregum divisorum et errantium. Et pasce haedos tuos: non sicut Petrus, cui dicitur, Pasce oves meas **(Joan. XXI, 17)**; sed pasce haedos tuos in tabernaculis pastorum, non in tabernaculo pastoris, ubi est unus grex et unus pastor **(Id. X, 16)**. Cognoscit enim semetipsam, ne hoc ei contingat, quia hoc contigit eis qui se in illa non cognoverunt. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Cf. Aristotle, *Physics* 4.9 217a11-18 (Barnes 1:368): Since we deny that a void exists, but for the rest the problem has been truly stated, that either there will be no movement, if there is not to be condensation and rarefaction, or the universe will bulge, or a transformation of water into air will always be balanced by an equal transformation of air into water (for it is clear that the air produced from water is bulkier than the water): it is necessary therefore, if compression does not exist, either that the next portion will be pushed outwards and make the outermost part bulge, or that somewhere else there must be an equal amount of water produced out of air, so that the entire bulk of the whole may be equal, or that nothing moves. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Gregory, *XL Homiliarum in Evagelia* 1.17.17 (PL 76:1148): Ibi Petrus cum Judaea conversa, quam post se traxit, apparebit. Ibi Paulus conversum, ut ita dixerim, mundum ducens. Ibi Andreas post se Achaiam, ibi Joannes Asiam, Thomas Indiam, in conspectum sui regis conversam ducet. Ibi omnes dominici gregis arietes cum animarum lucris apparebunt, qui sanctis suis praedicationibus Deo post se subditum gregem trahunt. Cum igitur tot pastores cum gregibus suis ante aeterni pastoris oculos venerint, nos miseri quid dicturi [Col.1148C] sumus, qui ad Dominum nostrum post negotium vacui redimus, qui pastorum nomen habuimus et oves quas 1505 ex nutrimento nostro debeamus ostendere non habemus? Hic pastores vocati sumus, et ibi gregem non ducimus. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Gregory, *XL Homiliarum in Evagelia* 1.17.8 (PL 76:1142): Pensemus cujus damnationis sit sine labore hic percipere mercedem laboris. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Gregory, *Moralia* 22.22.53 (PL 76:246): Terrae igitur fructus absque pecunia comedit, qui ecclesiastica commoda ad usum corporis percipit, sed exhortationis ministerium populo non impendit. Quid ad haec nos pastores dicimus, qui adventum districti judicis praecurrentes, officium quidem praeconis suscipimus, sed [Col.0246D] alimenta ecclesiastica muti manducamus? Exigimus quod nostro debetur corpori, sed non impendimus quod subjectorum debemus cordi. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)