363 Darkness (*Tenebre*)

Sins are said to be dark because they do them in darkness, they become dark and lead to darkness.

Concerning the first, Lam. 3[:2]: “He has brought me into darkness, and not into light.”

Concerning the second, the devil is like a thief in the night exercising his malice. Therefore, he wishes that the soul never has the light of grace, but to be in darkness, Eph. 5[:11]: “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.” Therefore, sinners are classified with the chicks and owls of the night because they flee the light, John 3[:19]: “The light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light,” etc. The stains of an undergarment are perceived better in the light of the sun and the marks of beauty in the brightness of a mirror.

Concerning the third, the similar seeks one like itself and the dark seeks the dark. Therefore, hell is fit for sinners just as thieves are put into a dark prison, Matt. 25[:30]: “The unprofitable servant cast out into the exterior darkness.” Where there will not be an exit, Job 10[:20-21]: “Suffer me, therefore, that I may lament my sorrow a little before I go, and return no more, to a land that is dark,” etc.

¶ Again, darkness is said to be sin for just as natural darkness is presented to the eye, so spiritual darkness to the soul. For material darkness impedes the eye, so that it may not see visible matters nor discern works, nor be aware of implications. So, sin induces obscurity and ignorance in the intellect, so that we cannot know the truth, depravity and malice in the feelings, nor be able to make an avoidance in the effect, nor be able to guard against evil.

Concerning the first, Eph. 4[:17-18]: “Walk not as also the Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated in the way of God, because of the blindness of their hearts.” Thus, the light of the sun is present to the blind man, however it is not seen by the blind. So, the light of heavenly wisdom is present to the wicked by essence, but it is absent by notice, John 1[:5]: “The light shines in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it,” that is, the sinners.

¶ Concerning the second, sinners are so effeminate that they do not know how to do well, but like the foolish and inebriated they follow their desires, Job 12[:7, 25]: “But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach you.” It follows, “They shall grope as in the dark, and not in the light, and he shall make them stagger like men that are drunk.” Because in the dark one gropes who does not consider what is to be done.

¶ Concerning the third, sinners are said to be darkness on account of the deviation of the effects which they do not know how to take care for, Psal. [91:5]: “They have not known nor understood, they walk on in darkness.”