377 Clothing (*Vestis*)

In clothing it is needed that it be clean. This happens through continence and penance, Eccle. 9[:8]: “At all times let your garments be white.” And Lev. 13[:6]: “And the man shall wash his clothes,” that is, his works through penance, “and shall be clean.” Apo. 3[:4]: “Which have not defiled their garments.” Therefore, the clothing of the flesh is called the nuptial clothing, because just as without clothing it is base for a man, so neither is virtue beautiful without charity.

Second, it is required that it be warm, and this is through charity otherwise it is insufficient, namely, for the heart. Thus, neither is there chastity without charity, Job 37[:17]: “Are not your garments hot, when the south wind blows upon the earth,” that is, fervent works when the soul is heated by grace.

¶ Again, it is required that clothing be large through injustice, namely, by covering all the members, that is, by giving to each what is his, Apo. 1[:12-13]: “I saw … one like to the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the feet.” Which is clothing reaching to the ankles, Act. 12[:8]: “Cast your garment about you and follow me. But some are not covered except to the loins in the figure of which it is said, 2 Kings 10[:4]: “Hanon cut away half of their garments,” of the servants of David, “even to the buttocks.” But Eccli. 27[:12]: “A fool is changed as the moon.” So, our people now are horned with hoods, sleeves, and long tight tunics, but in the Psal. [74:11] it is said, “I will break the horns of sinners.” And Sopho. 1[:8] it is said, “I will visit upon all such as are clothed with strange apparel.”

Again, it is required that clothing be colored by beauty.

Again, that it be whole, strong, and long lasting, Deut. 29[:5]: “Forty years through the desert: the garments,” of the children of Israel, “are not worn out,” that is, in the state of religion or penitence. Apo. 16[:15]: “Blessed is he that keeps his garments, lest he walk naked.” But alas because on the other hand some are clothed with the clothing of pride and these properly are the garments of the devil, because Eccli. 13[:1]: “He that has fellowship with the proud, shall put on pride.” Jos. 9[:5] the Gabaonites entered clothed with “old garments upon them.” Therefore, it is said in Eccli. 11[:4]: “Glory not in apparel at any time,” as the peacock in his tail, “and be not exalted in the day of your honor.” The example of Herod of Egypt, Act. 12[:21].

Again, some are clothed with clothing diseased of lust, which first infects the heart, afterwards the tongue, then the whole body, and finally the neighbors, Lev. 13[:56], clothing which had leprosy shall be burned in the flame, these are clothed with the skins of emissaries.

¶ Again, some are dressed with divided clothing of discord and wrath, they are clothed with the skins of dogs by biting and training, Lev. 19[:19]: “You shall not wear a garment that is woven of two sorts,” that is, you shall not send those who make themselves that they cherish parts, and thus they disturb others or who make for themselves divided clothes from the wolf and the lamb. Because from one part they give alms, they take off the shoe from one foot, and sometimes they are fully shod.

Again, some are clothed with garments gnawed with moths of the market and avarice. These put on the skins of foxes through trickery and deception, James 5[:1-2]: “Go to now, you rich men,” and it follows “your garments are motheaten.” Concerning all these it is said in Sopho. 1[:8]: “I will visit upon all such as are clothed with strange apparel.” Now of the things said, it is fitting that clothing be warm through scent of charity, that it be soft and delicate by sincere piety, that it be conveniently fit through the equity of justice.