156 Sword (*Gladius*)

In Sacred Scripture through the sword is sometimes understood the power of jurisdiction keeping the evil in check. Wherefore, Rom. 13[:4]: “He bears not the sword in vain.” For it is said the minister is the judge in anger to him who does evil, Job 19[:29]: “The sword is the revenger of iniquities.”

¶ Again, Peter says, Luke 22[:38]: “Behold here are two swords.” Because spiritual and temporal jurisdiction suffice in the Church, and anyone who is not under either of these is not ordained by God, except for damnation. Wherefore, Bernard, book 4, *De consideration ad Eugenium,[[1]](#endnote-1)* the spiritual sword drawn out by the Church is temporal. In truth, for the Church one is by the hand of the priest the other is of the soldier, but reasonably at the indication of the priest and the command of the emperor, and just as the sword grows rusty if extracted infrequently, so the one having jurisdiction contracts the rust of sin unless he exercises it for the correction of sins. Wherefore, says the Savior, Matt. 10[:34]: “I came not to send peace, but the sword.” Therefore, it is said in Zach. 11[:17]: “O shepherd, and idol, that forsakes the flock: the sword upon his arm … shall quite wither away.” It is thus concerning the superior having the sword of jurisdiction because he is an idol, that is, dilatory unless he corrects and defends his subjects. Wherefore, it is said in 1 Macc. 3[:3-4], that Juda Maccabeus “protected the camp with his sword. In his acts he was like a lion … roaring for his prey. Wherefore, Apo. 1[:16], it is said “From his mouth came out a sharp two-edged sword,” because the jurisdiction of the Church ought to cut vices out of every part, not to let go correcting them out of one part because of fear or favor.

Therefore, the Lord says, Ezech. 5[:1]: “Son of man, take a sharp knife that shaves the hair,” that is, superfluous things. In the figure of which when the king began to exercise jurisdiction on those two prostitutes, 3 Kings 3[:24]: “Bring me a sword.” Through which he might separate the trouble between them. So, ought the superior when trouble has begun among the subordinates to use his jurisdiction for correcting by this sword. Saul wished to be killed, 1 Kings 31[:4]: When “he said to his armor bearer: Draw your sword, and kill me: lest these uncircumcised come, and slay me.” For not slain by the sword of the superior, the demons will slay by eluding him. Wherefore, Gregory,[[2]](#endnote-2) which demons we have had intent in guilt we will have serving for laughter in penance.

¶ Therefore, the superior ought to strike with this sword like a blood-letter cuts through the vein to extract the poisonous humor and not only ought this sword work against the enemies of an invasion, that is, insurgent temptations. And concerning this sword, Christ said, “Let him sell his coat, and buy a sword,” [Luke 22:36].

¶ Which thus explains the pastoral abbot in *Vitis patrum,[[3]](#endnote-3)* he who has rest let him give it over and hold fast to the fight, Psal. [44:4]: “Gird your sword upon your thigh, O most mighty.” And especially against the temptations which are born of the carnal thigh of concupiscence, Eph. 6[:17]: take “the sword of the Spirit (which is the word of God),” which no one can resist. Therefore, the Philistines took care lest any sword or lance be in the land of Israel, as in 1 Kings 13[:19].

1. Bernard, *De consideratione* ad Eugenium III, 4.3.7 (PL 182:776-777): Uterque ergo Ecclesiae et spiritualis scilicet gladius, et materialis; sed is quidem pro Ecclesia, ille vero et ab Ecclesia exserendus: ille sacerdotis, is militis manu, sed sane ad nutum sacerdotis, et jussum imperatoris. Et de hoc alias. Nunc vero arripe, qui tibi ad feriendum creditus est; et vulnera ad salutem, si non omnes, si non vel multos, certe quos possis. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Gregory, cf. *Doctrinale de Triplici Morte* by Joannis Ravlini (Venetiis: Apud Altobellum Salicatium, nd.): Greg. Quos habuimus intentores in culpis, habebimus derisores in poenis.

https://archive.org/stream/bub\_gb\_0MuX26cTtp4C/bub\_gb\_0MuX26cTtp4C\_djvu.txt [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. *Vitiae patrum*, Verba seniorum 4.14 (PL 73:1017-1018): 14. Dixit abbas Pastor: Scriptum est in Evangelio: Qui habet tunicam, vendat eam, et emat sibi gladium (Lucae XXII). Hoc intelligitur: Qui habet requiem, dimittat eam, et teneat pugnam; pugnam vero dicebat adversus diabolum. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)