226 Better (*Melior*)

One thing is better than another for three reasons, for example if it would be more secure, useful, commodious, or more fruitful, or if it were more durable.

In the first way, a castle is said to be better than a camp in a time of war.

In the second way, one village is said to be better than another if it returns more to the lord each year.

In the third way a work of stone is said to be better than of wood. In these ways the religious life excels the secular.

And the first reason of security, because in the secular life there are many occasions of sins through the five senses which are not in the religious life where silence is decreed.

The second reason of fruitfulness, because in the secular there are many occupations and perhaps damnable ones there. In the religious life all the occupations are set up according to the rule. They are meritorious to such an extent that entry into the religious life takes away every stain, resolves every vow.

The third reason of durability, because the works of the secular world will be terminated, and often sooner than man would wish, but the actions of the religious life are informed through charity. These begin through grace and are extended into eternal glory just as a sacrifice or pledge of future payment.