294 Full, Fullness (*Plenum, Plenitudo*)

A vessel is judged to be full by three indications. When, namely, from its dividing it flows to others. When upon its filling it will not receive. When it emits a low sound. So, the fullness of grace in a holy man is shown from three signs.

From sound teaching which flows in, Act. 2[:4]: “They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.”

Second, from his life which rejects foreign infusions.

¶ For the flesh tends to overfill the pleasure, the world the desiring, and the devil the vanity, Isai. 1[:11, 13]: “I am full, I desire not holocausts of rams,” etc. “I will not abide.” This fulness made the apostles to despise worldly things. Wherefore that men so avidly desire worldly things is a sign of vanity.

¶ Third, from grace by which one subjects himself to faith, Joan. 1[:14]: “Full of grace and truth.” And from this fullness we all accept.

Again, the sign of fullness is the weight of the matter. For a full vessel is moved with difficulty, so the weight of love makes holy men to be stable and unmovable.

¶ The example of Peter who empty moved the crowd of the multitude, [Matt. 15:32]. The example of Saint Lucy,[[1]](#endnote-1) whom the Holy Spirit fixed with such great weight that in no way could she be moved.

1. Cf. Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend* 4 (Ryan 1:29): Then Paschasius summoned procurers and said to them: "Invite a crowd to take their pleasure with this woman, and let them abuse her until she is dead." But when they tried to carry her off, the Holy Spirit fixed her in place so firmly that they could not move her. Paschasius called in a thousand men and had her hands and feet bound, but still they could not lift her. He sent for a thousand yoke of oxen: the Lord's holy virgin could not be moved. Magicians were brought in to try to move her by their incantations: they did no better. "What is this witchery," Paschasius exclaimed, "that makes a thousand men unable to budge a lone maiden!" "There is no witchery here," said Lucy, "but the power of Christ; and even if you add ten thousand more, you will find me still unmovable." [↑](#endnote-ref-1)