296 Preacher, To Preach (*Predicor, Predicare*)

First, what the preacher ought to do before the sermon is to pray so that the sermon of God may cure and bear fruit in the listeners. In the figure of which thing the servant of Abraham was sent to seek a wife to the advantage of Isaac, he prayed to the Lord that he might meet if there were such a one, etc., Gen. 24[:3]. So, when the preacher prepares himself so that he might be able and meet the grace of God for himself. In the sign of which Christ said to his disciples whom he sent in advance to prepare the paschal meal, Luc. 22[:10]: “There shall meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water,” who is the preacher of good disposition whom Christ meets with a vessel full of grace, according to that of the Psal. [67:34]: “He will give to his voice the voice of power.”

Second, the preacher ought to have the authority of speaking, Rom. 10[:15]: “how shall they preach unless they be sent?” Upon which authority the Lord founding for himself the pope, Extra. *De haereticis,* c. *Cum ex iniuncto*.[[1]](#endnote-1) It condemns those preaching without authority, without the faculty of the Church or the diocesan bishops. And if they say that it is inspired to them to preach, it is not to be believed of them, unless they show this by miracles. Just like Moses did, sent by the Lord in Egypt by transforming his rod into a snake, Exod. 7[:9]. Or where he can show this through scriptural attestation, as John the Baptist did, Luke 3[:4]: “A voice of one crying in the wilderness.” It is however to be noted here that those preaching outside their jurisdiction are to be held to preach of necessity through themselves or through others. When it is necessary that if they do that through others, as through vicars or through brothers sent, it is not entirely safe. Because either they themselves are enough, and then if they do not preach, they are the lazy servant to hide their talent. If in truth they are insufficient there is a danger for them to receive such a benefice which requires such an obligation when they are ignorant.

¶ Therefore preachers are soldiers of Christ to whom it is said in figure that in Gen. 37[:14]: “Go and see if all things be well with your brethren, and the cattle.” So, it is said in Matt. last chapter [28:19]: “Going, teach all nations.” So, the celestial bodies go, the inferior moving at the motion of those above. Wherefore in figure of these the angel said to Balaam, Num. 22[:20]: “Go with them.” Thus, neither ought a preacher teach anything than what Holy Spirit inspires. Go therefore and see according to Pliny,[[2]](#endnote-2) the caladrium bird by seeing a sick man heals him, because it thus extracts the sickness and by flying away consumes it, so ought the prelate as preacher, Ezech. 3[:16-17], it is said, “The word of the Lord,” through the prophet, “came to me, saying: Son of man, I have made you a watchman to the house of Israel: and you shall hear the word out of my mouth, and shall tell it them from me. If, when I say to the wicked, you shall surely die: you declare it not to him, nor speak to him, that he may be converted from his wicked way, and live: the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but I will require his blood at your hand. But if you give warning to the wicked, and he be not converted,” he indeed shall be warned, “but you have delivered your soul.” And from the aforesaid therefore it may be collected that three things are necessary to be preached.

First, purity of life or remorse of conscience as for as mortal sin otherwise he preaches himself and sins, according to that of the Psal. [49:16]: “To the sinner God has said: Why do you declare (my justices)?”

Second, he is competent in knowledge that namely he may have explicit acquaintance of the articles of the faith, the ten commandments, and discretion of sin from what is not a sin.

¶ Otherwise “the blind leads the blind,” [Luke 6:39].

Third, it is authority by which one is sent about which it is said further above, [Causa] 16, quest. 1, c. [19], *Adicimus*.[[3]](#endnote-3) Here it is, therefore note what since three things are necessary to the preacher, knowledge, doctrine, and life, one however is not enough without the others. For knowledge without doctrine[[4]](#endnote-4) is of no utility, Eccli. 20[:32]: “Wisdom that is hid, and treasure that is not seen: what profit is there in them both?”

Again, doctrine without knowledge is great foolishness. Wherefore Gregory,[[5]](#endnote-5) it is necessary that what is preached be without understanding, 1 Tim. 1[:7]: “Understanding neither the things they say, nor whereof they affirm.” Such ones are the sons of vipers who before time break from the maternal womb, in order that they may exit to the garden. So many before time interrupt their study, in order that they may hurry to preaching.

¶ Again, knowledge and doctrine without life,[[6]](#endnote-6) it is a great vanity. For it is a great vanity like unto illuminate others with a candle and to consume oneself. Such ones have the voice of Jacob, that is, good doctrine but the hands of Esau, that is, evil works.

¶ Therefore the end and intention of preaching ought to be the praise of God, or the saints, or the edification of Christ, not temporal acquisition or human praise, unless perhaps to acquire something, to the fame of the saints, the construction of a bridge, or a church, or to some act of penance, as is evident [Causa] 8, quest. 1, c. [8], *Olim*.[[7]](#endnote-7) Out of which it seems that financial agents ought not to preach, from which they do contrary things. Such ones of that office often are illiterate, because they are not sent, but rather prohibited, Extra. *De poenitentiis et remissionibus*, c. [*Cum ex] eo*.[[8]](#endnote-8)

Third, because they do not intend the due end, when they receive approval for such things.

¶ For water is first in the fountain than in the river, the seed was first in the earth than in spice, Dan. 11[:33]: “They that are learned among the people shall teach many.” Psal. [70:17]: “You have taught me, O God, and till now I will declare your wonderful works.”

¶ Second, he ought to be eloquent in order that he make it to be understood, just as a mouth teaches better when it is opened, Matt. 5[:2]: “And opening his mouth, he taught them.” So, Esdras read openly and distinctly to be understood, Nehe. 8[:18].

Third, he ought to be working that he may warn by example. So, the eagle flies over her chicks, so the painter paints before his disciples, Acts 1[:1]: “Jesus began to do and to teach.” Esdr. 7[:10]: “Esdras prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do and to teach.” But alas because in Rom. 2[:22]: “You that say, men should not commit adultery, commit adultery.” Job 4[:3]: “Behold you have taught many, and you have strengthened the weary hands.”

Again, 2 Tim. 4[:2]: “Preach the word: be instant in season: reprove,” if they sin, “entreat,” that they may correct themselves, “rebuke,” if they are slow, “in all patience and doctrine,” by threatening torments on the evil and thus they may recover from evil. Just as a bird having seen the noose jumps back, Jonah 3[:6]: “The word of the Lord came to the king,” and he repented either by promising joys for the good and by love in God they may profit. Just as the workman promised a great wage, Jer. 15[:16]: “The word of the Lord was to me a joy.”

Again, in the fourth place, the preacher ought to have the holiness of his life. For it is not to believe wicked witnesses nor heaps of letters, so neither contaminated preachers.

¶ Again, he ought to have eloquence of tongue, etc.

Third, he ought to have knowledge of scripture, because just as a sharp knife is perilous in the hand of an idiot barber, so preaching in the mouth of an illiterate. Concerning these three it is said therefore in Acts 18[:24]: “Apollo was a man,” as for the first which is said concerning virtue, “eloquent,” as for the second, “one mighty in the scriptures,” as for the third. Note here that John Chrysostom says in *Imperfecto*, homily 16,[[9]](#endnote-9) it is better not to teach, nor to reprehend the laity, than to teach and reprehend, and to exhibit yourself as reprehensible. Because such teaching is more laughable than worthy of hearing. Therefore, a priest wishing to teach another first should teach himself, so that he not be in disgrace. Therefore, such a preacher does not want to save another, but rather through teaching palliate his own evil acts, and acquire praise for knowledge and it follows there whoever freely hears that one teaching who does not hear himself. Therefore, it is said in the first place [Psal. 84:9]: “I will hear what the Lord God will speak.” And [1] John 1[:1]: “Which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, of the word of life,” this “we declare unto you,” so ought preachers first hear and see in themselves through implementation of good works, otherwise they will be like to the mother birds who feed their chicks and attack, however they themselves remain wretched, Eccle. [6:7] namely, “All the labor of man is for his mouth, but his soul shall not be filled.”

¶ Such are “the false prophets from the mouth of such three unclean spirits to proceed like frogs,” Apo. 16[:13]. For a frog sitting in the mud emits a great cry from his mouth because he only puts that organ outside of the mud. So those sitting in the mud of their vices according to the whole body, but they only put their mouth outside, since it is well said, Jer. 12[:2]: “You are near in their mouth, and far from their reins.” Therefore, the Lord wished that they follow Gedeon to the battle who were drinking, [Jud. 7:7] rather than drinking hand to mouth,[[10]](#endnote-10) as if saying, only those are apt for fighting against vices who apply the works of the hand to the sound of the words. Wherefore the *Gloss* says upon the third chapter of Proverbs,[[11]](#endnote-11) they who wish to be an example to others should first be an example to themselves. Because the voice of work is stronger than that of the word, Augustine, first book, *Confessiones*, c. 16,[[12]](#endnote-12) says he has read of Jove the thunderer and the adulterer. Therefore, it is said, Apo. 10[:4]: “Seal up the things which the seven thunders have spoken; and write them not.” Because words without deeds do not weigh much. Wherefore John, Apo. 3[:21] saw works to proceed from the throne of God.

¶ For just as naturally lightning precedes thunder, so deeds ought to precede words, if teaching proceeds from the throne of God. Wherefore Exod. 9[:23] when the Lord gave the law to Moses there was a thundering, and they went away because when woks precede in sermons, the words penetrate to the heart.

1. *Decretales,* X.5.7.12: Quum ex iniuncto...Licet autgem desiderium intelligendi divinas scripturas, et secundum eas studium adhortandei, reprehendendum non sit, sed potius commendandum: in eo tamen apparent quidam laici merito arguendi, quo *tales* occulota conventicula *sua* celebrant, officium praedicationis Christi sibi usurpant, sacerdotum simplicitatem eludunt, et eorum consortium aspernantur, qjui talibus non inhaerent. ... Quum igitur doctorum ordo sit quasi praecipuus in ecclesia, non debet sibi quisquam indifferenter pradicationis officium usurpare. Nam secundum Apostolum: “quomodo praedicabunt, nisi mittantur?” ... Unde, quum Dominus vellet mittere Moysen in Aegyptum ad filios Israel, ut crederent ei, quod mitteretur ab ipso, dedit ei signum, ut converteret virgam in colubrum, et *colubrum in* virgam iterum reformaret. Joannes quoque Baptista speciale suae missionis testimonium protulit de scriptura, dicens ... “Ego vox clamantis in deserto, dirigite viam Domino, sicut ait Esaias Prophets.” [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Pliny, cf. Alexander Neckam, *De laudibus divinae Sapientiae* 218-226 (Wright, p. 378):

Mundum describens inscribens singula verbum

Mira virtutum lege beavit opus.

Artificis virtus sese declarat in ipsis

Rebus, et artificis luce relucet opus. 220

Intuitu levi caulandrius aspicit aegrum,

Cum Lachesis volvit stamina lasta manu.

Avertens oculos testatur voce dolorem,

Supremum quotiens cernit adesse diem,

Obtusam visus aciem caro reddit acutam,

Plumarum fertur lacteus esse color.

Cf. George C. Druce, *The Caladrius and its Legend, Sculpted Upon the Twelfth-Century Doorway of Alne Church, Yorkshire* in *Archaeological Journal* (Royal Archaeological institute of London) vol. 69, 1912 pp. 381-416), p. [13].

The word (of God) when fashioning the world and ordering all individual things, Blessed the work with a wondrous law of goodness. The goodness of the Creator declares itself in his very creatures, And the work is illuminated by the brightness of the Creator. With propitious gaze the caladrius looks at the sick man, When Lachesis twists her thread with favouring hand. With eyes averted it raises a warning cry of sorrow, As often as it perceives the day of death approaching. Its flesh restores the bright keenness of vision which has grown dim. The colour of its wings is said to be milk-white. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Decretum, Causa 16, quest. 1, c. 19, *Adicimus* illud etiam, quod nobis propter inprobitatem quorumdam monachorum religionis uestræ uerbo mandastis per uicarios nostros, hoc specialiter statuentes, ut preter Domini sacerdotes nullus audeat predicare, siue monachus siue laicus ille sit, qui cuiuslibet scientiæ nomine glorietur. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Cf. James of Voragine, *Sermones Aurei De S. Dominico*, Sermo 5 (Augustae Vindelicorum et Cracoviae: Christophorum Bartl, 1760, 2:238b): Doctrina vero sine scientia est magne fatuitas. Scientia et doctrina sine vita est magne vanitatis. … Beatus igitur Dominicus habuit scientiam cum doctrina, alias sua scientia nullius fuisset utilitatis. *Sapientia absconsa, et thesarus invisus, quae utilitas in utrisque.* [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Cf. Gregory, *Moralia* Epistola 2 (PL 75:513): Sed tamen quisquis de Deo loquitur, curet necesse est ut quidquid audientium mores instruit, rimetur; et hunc rectum loquendi ordinem deputet, si cum opportunitas aedificationis [Col.0513B] exigit, ab eo se, quod loqui coeperat, utiliter derivet.

Cf. Hilary of Poitiers, *De Trinitate* 8.1 (PL 10:237): Sequitur vero hanc voluntatis sapientiam sermo stultitiae: quia necesse est quod stulte sapitur, stulte et praedicetur.

Cf. James of Voragine, *Sermones Aurei* *De S. Dominico*, Sermo 5 (Augustae Vindelicorum et Cracoviae: Christophorum Bartl, 1760, 2:239a): Unde Gregor. Necesse est quod stulte sapitur stulte praedicetur. … Tales sunt sicut filii viperarum, qui ante tempus rumpunt maternum uterum ut exire possint ad ortum. Sic et multi ante tempus interrumpunt studium, ut exire possint ad praedicandum.

<https://books.google.com/books?id=9fxkAAAAcAAJ&pg=PA239&dq=filii+viperarum+qui+ante+tempus&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiBuq6t-4jdAhUP26wKHVcpCwsQ6AEIKjAA#v=onepage&q=filii%20viperarum%20qui%20ante%20tempus&f=false> [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Cf. James of Voragine, *Sermones Aurei De S. Dominico*, Sermo 5 (Augustae Vindelicorum et Cracoviae: Christophorum Bartl, 1760, 2:239a): Tertio habuit scientiam et doctrinam cum vita, alis fuisset vanitas. Magna enim vanitas est instar candelae alios illuminare et seipsum consumere. Tales habent vocem Jacob, id est, doctrinam, sed manus Esau, id est, operationem malum. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. *Decretum,* Causa 8, quest. 1, c. 8, Olim iussus est frater premortui fratris uxorem ducere, ut non sibi, sed illi suscitaret sobolem, eius que nomine uocaret quod inde nasceretur. Quod si recusaret, discalciatus uno pede conspui solebat in facie. Nunc euangelii quisque predicator ita debet in ecclesia laborare, ut defuncto fratri, id est Christo, suscitet semen, qui pro nobis mortuus est, et quod suscitatum fuerit eius nomen accipiat. At uero qui electus ab ecclesia ministerium euangelizandi rennuerit, ab ipsa ecclesia digne merito que contempnitur.

Qui enim et sibi prodest, et ecclesiæ, bene intelligitur utroque pede calciatus. Unde illud: “Quam speciosi pedes euangelizantium bona”. Qui autem lucrandorum curam refugit aliorum, discalciati illius non figuratum significauit, sed in se inpletum portauit obprobrium. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. *Decretales,* X.5.38.14: Quum ex eo ... Eleemosynarum quoque quaestores, quorum quidam se alios mentiendo abusiones nonullas in sua praedicatione proponunt, admitti, nisi apostolicas vel dicesani episcopi literas veras exhibeant, prohibemus, et tunc praeter id, quo in ipsis continebitur literis, nihil populo proponere permittuntur.... [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. (Pseudo-)Chrysostom, *Opus imperfectum in Mattheum* 3 (PG 56:726): Melius est nec docere, nec reprehendere laicum, quam docere et reprehendere, et teipsum in reprehension consistere: quoniam talis doctrina doctoris non est audibilis, sed derisibilis. Propter quod omnis sacerdos si vult docere populum, prius seipsum doceat: si autem seipsum non vult docere de omni quod docet, nec seipsum arguere de omni quod arguit, nec alios docat nec arguat quemquam, ut si judicium Dei non evadit, vel hominum opprobrium non patiatur. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. The Latin here has it backwards from the Vulgate: Judges 7:7: Et ait Dominus ad Gedeon: In trecentis viris qui lambuerunt aquas, liberabo vos, et tradam in manu tua Madian: omnis autem reliqua multitudo revertatur in locum suum.

And the Lord said to Gedeon: By the three hundred men, that lapped water, I will save you, and deliver Madian into thy hand: but let all the rest of the people return to their place.

The explanation that follows demonstrates that the correct meaning was understood: "That lapped water": These were preferred that took the water up in their hands, and so lapped it, before them who laid themselves quite down to the waters to drink: which argued a more eager and sensual disposition. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. *Glossa ordinaria*, *Liber Proverbiorum* 3.20 (PL 113:1085): VERS. 20.---Sapientia illius eruperunt abyssi. In diebus Noe, etc., usque ad quaeque minoribus in exemplum monstrent, examinant. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Augustine, *Confessiones* 1.16.25 (PL 32:672): Nonne ego in te legi et tonantem Jovem et adulterantem? Et utique non posset haec duo; sed actum est, ut haberet auctoritatem ad imitandum verum adulterium, lenocinante falso tonitruo.

Have I not read in you of Jove, both thunderer and adulterer? In truth, he could not be both of these, but the story is told so that authority would be provided to imitate the true adultery while the false thunder cloaks it over. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)