327 Holy, Holiness (*Sanctus, Sanctitas*)

Man sanctifies one way, God another. For man is sanctified in accordance with disposition and ministerially, and this is by the word of prayer, 1 Tim. 4[:5]: “For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.” God however is sanctified effectively or causally and this is a pleasure of his election. For whomever the Lord elects, he is holy.

¶ Again, sanctification is assumed for threefold reasons. For cleansing from sin, Rom. 6[:22]: “Being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification.”

Second, it is assumed for dedication to divine worship, Exod. 40[:9]: “Take the oil of unction and anoint the tabernacle with its vessels, that they may be sanctified.”

Third, for confirmation in good, thus John and others confirmed in grace are said to be sanctified, Jer. 1[:5]: “Before you came forth out of the womb, I sanctified you.”

¶ In this way the Church is said to be sanctified in the laity when they are cleansed from sins, in clerics by the Lord himself delivered over to his worship, and in prelates when they are confirmed.

¶ Concerning the first, Num. 31[:23]: “All that may pass through the fire, shall be purified by fire, but whatsoever cannot abide the fire, shall be sanctified with the water of expiation.” This was the sanctification of the commoners signifying that through the water of baptism and the fire of penitence anyone can be saved and purged from original and actual sin, Psal. [65:12]: “We have passed through fire and water, and you have brought us out.”

Concerning the second, it is said that Aaron in person of the clerics, Eccli. 45[:4]: “He sanctified him in his faith, and meekness, and chose him out of all flesh.” In faith as for God, in meekness of patience as for our neighbor, and separated from the flesh as for himself. And just as the sanctified Church is not devolved further to another use nor profane, so neither should these revert further to sin, but [1 Thess. 4:4]: “That everyone should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification.”

Concerning the third, Exod. 19[:22]: “The priests that come to the Lord, let them be sanctified,” that is, let them be confirmed in good because they are columns for upholding others.

¶ In figure of this triple sanctification three kinds of animals were offered in the tabernacle, Num. 15[:3]. The ox which fits to the labor of the laity. The lamb which expresses the simplicity of the religious. The ram the leader in the flock which fits to the rule of the prelates.

For the sanctification many things should move us. First, the will of God, for if insensitive things obey the mute and weak portions of medicine so that for a time they may be healed corporally, why not more man to the voice of God so that he may be sanctified, that is, [1] Thess. 4[:3]: “For this is the will of God, your sanctification.”

¶ Second, the call of the Lord, if the birds obey the voice of their lord, much more men should obey the voice of God, 1 Thess. 4[:7]: “For God has not called us unto uncleanness, but unto sanctification.”

Third, the example of a saint for the disciple imitates the master, the deputy the class, Lev. 19[:2]: “Be holy, because I [the Lord your God] am holy.”

Second, the value of this material ought not to move which ought to be sanctified which is the rational soul, the house of God, the special bride of the spiritual Christ.

¶ Concerning the first, if the sow wallows in the mud, if the dog returns to its vomit, it is no wonder since they are irrational, but if the daughter of the king, which is the faithful soul, it is shameful. Therefore, it is said in Jos. 7[:13]: “Sanctify the people” for me. He does not say the flock, Eccli. 2[:20]: “They that fear the Lord, will prepare their hearts, and in his sight will sanctify their souls.”

¶ Concerning the second, it would be shameful to make of the temple of God a dung pile, of the image of God an idol, Psal. [92:5] “Holiness becomes your house.”

¶ Concerning the third, men of the world want to have a family, Luke 1[:75]: “In holiness and justice before him.” Therefore, because God wants to have a holy house in which to rest the holy family which serves him, and such is the soul. It is fitting that the soul be holy, but alas because Ezech. 28[:18] it is said, “You have defiled your sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities.”

Again, Augustine says in the book *De dissolutionibus recte fidei*,[[1]](#endnote-1) none of the saints is without sin, nor however because of this does he leave off being just, with affection he holds on to sanctity. And as all holy men truly proclaim all holy men are sinners, because in truth they have what they lament, although they are not worthy of damnation. Wherefore Bernard says,[[2]](#endnote-2) three things make a man holy: the just act, the devout affection, and sober victuals. The first ordains him to God, the second to his neighbor, and the third to himself.

Concerning the first, Eccli. 30[:15]: “Health of the soul in holiness of justice.” The Greek word is *agios, sanctum,* holy, which means without earth as, namely, our association should be in heaven.

¶ Concerning the second, Augustine in the third book, *Contra Faustum,* c. 5,[[3]](#endnote-3) the holy ones rejoice in the truth and are one in Christ. Wherefore in the Psal. [49:5] it is said, “Gather together his saints to him: who set his covenant before sacrifices.” This covenant is what John said 13[:34]: “A new commandment I give unto you: That you love one another.” And Gregory, book 20 of the *Moralia*,[[4]](#endnote-4)the proof of holiness is not to make signs, but to love everyone, to feel for God the truth, for our neighbors the good, and for ourselves humility. Wherefore in John [13:35]: “By this shall men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another.” Wherefore Chrysostom, *Homilia* 50,[[5]](#endnote-5) do you wish to appear holy? Be austere about your life, benign about another’s. Men hear you commanding small thing, and they see you making grand things.

¶ Concerning the third, John the Baptist by his only victory saved his holiness as is evident in Mark the first chapter [1:4] so therefore ought the people in the old law.

Again, Augustine in the book *De mendacio,* c. 27,[[6]](#endnote-6) in these consists holiness: chastity of the body, purity of the soul, and truth of teaching.

¶ However it is to be known simply that a holy man ought not to be said as one who can lack in the aforesaid by the saying of Augustine in the book *De fide et simbolo* chapter 24,[[7]](#endnote-7) sanctity (*sanctitas*) is derived from making sacred (*sanciendo*), that is, from making permanent. Therefore, only those are said to be holy who abide in confirmed love, about whom Eph. 2[:19]: “Now you are no more strangers and foreigners; but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God.”

¶ Concerning these domestics of God it behooves us to have some familiarity according to that of Job 5[:1]: “Turn to some of the saints.” Those going over the sea because they do not have permanence turn themselves to the fixed star which is called the star of the sea and by it, they are directed to port. So, we who are mobile can be directed to a port of salvation by the saints who are abiding in heaven.

¶ For concerning ourselves we do not know to judge in this life whether or if we are holy according to that of Eccle. 9[:1]: “Man knows not whether he be worthy of love, or hatred,” that is, he does not know the certitude of knowledge but by conjecture unless this by revelation of the spirit. But just as Chrysostom says *Super Mattheum* by signs he can conjecture that fire is known by its sparks, red color, odors, the sun by its rays, the saints have three sparks because they are holy beloved, Psal. [41:3]: “My soul has thirsted after the strong living God.”

Second, fervent words, Eccli. 48[:1]: “Elias stood up, as a fire, and his word burnt like a torch” of fire.

Third, the fervency of works, Job 37[:17]: “Are not your garments hot, when the south wind blows upon the earth?” Therefore, where these sparks are seen it is supposed to be a fire. So, ought we according to that of Ezech. 1[:6]: “They sparkled like the appearance of glowing brass.” Therefore, the desired words and works of the saints are sparks because they are light without the weight of earthly matters, and they are as if in the ear of God soundings, and shinings because they are flamings by love.

Two holy men have three rays. One, by which they know the Lord and his power, Psal. [61:12]: “These two things have I heard that power belongs to God,” etc.

The other, by which they know the world and its misery and vanity. For all three who see you are made sons by you.

Third, by which they know themselves and their baseness, Mich. 6[:14]: “Your humiliation shall be in the midst of you.”

Wherefore just as these are seen, by the rays of the sun we suppose the sun, so these things seen we can suppose God in us, Eccli. 43[:4]: “The sun three times as much, burns the mountains.”

Third, the holy men have three odors. Of which one is of devout prayer, Apo. 5[:8]: “Having every one of them golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints.”

The second of the odors is outstanding fame, [2] Cor. 2[:15]: “For we are the good odor of Christ” in every place.

The third odor is a florid conscience, Can. 1[:15]: “Our bed is flourishing.” Through such we can have other things in us, Eccli. 24[:18]: “As a rose plant in Jericho.”

When our master and Lord is holy it befits us to be, Lev. 19[:2]: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

¶ For it is said in Eccli. 10[:2]: “What manner of man the ruler of a city is, such also are they that dwell therein.”

¶ Therefore especially the ministers of Christ ought to be triply holy and in three things which are mouth, work, and association. In the mouth because for sound teaching. In work as for a holy life. In association as for a good reputation.

Concerning the first, it is said in Eccli. 2[:20]: “They that fear the Lord, will prepare their hearts, and in his sight will sanctify their souls.”

¶ Concerning the second, Exod. 29[:33]: “That the hands of the offerors may be sanctified,” that is, works and especially from contact of women. Certainly, in the old law it was not permitted for priests during the time of their ministry to visit their legitimate wives nor to go out of the boundaries of the temple, as is treated in Lev. 8[:33]. And when they were not sacrificing except the flesh of cattle. As a shadow it gives the figure of our sacrifice. Therefore, cleanliness is more forcefully to be preserved by our priests who in the truth of the matter and not in figure handle that true body of Christ.

¶ Concerning the third, 1 Pet. 2[:12]: “Having your conversation good among the Gentiles: that whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by the good works, which they shall behold in you, glorify God.” The good minister of God does this if by inordinate gesture or act he does not offend the eyes of the onlookers. Wherefore the Apostle says [Rom. 12:17]: “Providing good things, not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of all men.” Because a good conscience is allowed to us, because of us the material is not enough with good fame as for others. For who neglects the faith of his conscience is cruel to his reputation. Wherefore to [1] Tim. 4[:12] it is said, “Be an example of the faithful in word and in conversation.” And again to [1] Cor. [4:9]: “We are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men.”

1. Augustine cf. Gennadius Massiliensis, *Liber de Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus* 86 (PL 58:1000): Nullus sanctus et justus caret peccato, nec tamen ex hoc desinit esse justus, vel sanctus, cum affectu teneat sanctitatem. Non enim naturae humanae viribus, sed propositi adjumento per Dei gratiam acquirimus sanctitatem. Et ideo veraciter se omnes sancti pronuntiant peccatores, quia in veritate habent quod plangant; et si non reprehensione conscientiae certe mobilitate et mutabilitate praevaricatricis [Col.1000B] naturae. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Bernard, *Sermo* 64.2 (PL 183:687): Porro tria sunt quae sanctam faciunt hominis vitam: victus sobrius, actus justus, sensus pius. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Augustine, *Contra Faustum* 3.5 (PL 42:217): Unitate enim gaudent, et in Christo unum sunt: et si alius aliud, et alius aliud; aut alius aliter, et alius aliter; vera tamen omnes dicunt, nec sibi ullo modo contraria, si pius lector accedat, si mitis legat, si non haeretico animo unde rixetur, sed fideli corde unde aedificetur, inquirat. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Gregory, *Moralia* 20.7.17 (PL 76:147): Probatio quippe sanctitatis non est signa facere, sed unumquemque ut se diligere, de Deo autem vera, de proximo vero meliora quam de semetipso sentire. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. (Pseudo-)Chrysostom, *Opus imperfectum in Mattheum* Hom. 43 ex cap. 23 (PG 56:878): Vis apparere sanctus? Circa tuam vitam esto austerus, circa alienam autem benignus. Audiant te homines parva mandantem, et grandia videant facientem. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Augustine, *De mendacio* 19.40 (PL 40:514): Ista sunt autem quae sanctitatis causa servanda sunt: pudicitia corporis, et castitas animae, et veritas doctrinae. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Augustine, *De fide et symbolo* 9.19 (PL 40:192): Frui autem sapientia Dei, nihil est aliud quam ei dilectione cohaerere: neque quisquam in eo quod percipit permanet, nisi dilectione; et ideo Spiritus sanctus dicitur, quoniam ad permanendum sanciuntur quaecumque sanciuntur, nec dubium est a sanciendo sanctitatem vocari.

Cf. …sanctity (sanctitatem) is derived from sanction (a sanciendo). [↑](#endnote-ref-7)