334 Satisfaction (*Satisfactio*)

Because I sin in three ways, namely, in thought, word, and deed, therefore I should repent triply and make satisfaction. Namely, in thought through remorse in which there is sorrow. In word through confession in which there is shame. In deed through satisfaction in which there is exercise through striking of my stomach and beating my breast. In which act I find the three aforesaid, three experiences, namely, the blow, the sound, and the touch: in the blow the contrition is reflected, in the sound, the confession, and in the touch, the satisfaction.

Again, the penitent is not accustomed to strike his breast with one or only a few fingers, but with all his fingers at once. Because just as a hand has five fingers, so satisfaction ought to have five parts, namely, prayer, abstinence, alms, labor, and a sharp accusation, about which Psal. [34:13]: “I was clothed with haircloth. I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer shall be turned into my bosom.”

Again, the affect or virtue of satisfaction is triple: to avoid fault, to increase grace, and pay the penalty.

¶ Again, the kinds of satisfaction consist in works of mercy of which there are seven corporal and seven spiritual.[[1]](#endnote-1) The corporal works are visit, drink, feed, ransom, clothe, shelter, and bury. Visit the sick, [give drink to the thirsty], feed the hungry, ransom the captive, clothe the naked, provide hospice to the pilgrim, and shelter the homeless, that is, to bury the dead.

¶ The seven spiritual works are admonish, persuade, instruct, comfort, forgive, bear, and pray. To admonish sinners, to persuade, that is, counsel the doubtful, to instruct the ignorant, to comfort the afflicted, to forgive offenses, to bear, that is, support the sick, and to pray for your enemy.

¶ Concerning the principal parts for healing this, which are fasting, prayer, alms, and other kinds of satisfaction are brought back as if over and above. For the hair shirt is a use for the healthy, the hard bed, vigils, pilgrimages, chastisement of the naked body, and other punishments of the body may be reduced to fasting. Every benefit corporal or spiritual looks to almsgiving as its neighbor out of habit.

¶ Other spiritual works of this kind which regards prayer are singing, reading and preaching.

Again, according to some teachers fasting holds the lowest place in making satisfaction, prayer the middle place, and alms giving the highest, which seems to effect a universal medicine, Luke 11[:41]: “Give alms; and behold, all things are clean unto you.” Tob. 4[:11]: “For alms deliver from all sin.” And according to Thomas, *Super 4 Sentenciis*,[[2]](#endnote-2) and in *Secunda Secunde*,[[3]](#endnote-3) alms giving virtually includes prayer and fasting and this doubly because alms giving obligates the receiver to pray and fast for the one giving and because alms giving is like an offering which has the power of prayer. And by subtraction of goods which are ordered for preserving the body through alms giving performed virtually it contains fasting by which the body is weakened.

To sense (*Sentire*) [c. 343], see the folio below.

1. Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* IIª-IIae q. 32 a. 2 arg. 1: Ponuntur enim septem eleemosynae corporales, scilicet pascere esurientem, potare sitientem, vestire nudum, recolligere hospitem, visitare infirmum, redimere captivum, et sepelire mortuum; quae in hoc versu continentur, visito, poto, cibo, redimo, tego, colligo, condo. Ponuntur etiam aliae septem eleemosynae spirituales, scilicet docere ignorantem, consulere dubitanti, consolari tristem, corrigere peccantem, remittere offendenti, portare onerosos et graves, et pro omnibus orare; quae etiam in hoc versu continentur, consule, castiga, solare, remitte, fer, ora; ita tamen quod sub eodem intelligatur consilium et doctrina. Videtur autem quod inconvenienter huiusmodi eleemosynae distinguantur. Eleemosyna enim ordinatur ad subveniendum proximo. Sed per hoc quod proximus sepelitur, in nullo ei subvenitur, [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Thomas Aquinas, Super Sent., lib. 4 d. 15 q. 1 a. 4 qc. 3 arg. 2: Praeterea, omne peccatum vel est carnale vel spirituale. Sed, sicut dicit Hieronymus, jejunio sanantur pestes corporis, oratione pestes mentis. Ergo non debet esse aliquod aliud opus satisfactorium. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* IIª-IIae q. 32 a. 2 co.: Uno modo, poscendo auxilium a Deo, et quantum ad hoc ponitur oratio, qua quis pro aliis orat. Alio modo, impendendo humanum auxilium, et hoc tripliciter. Uno modo, contra defectum intellectus, et si quidem sit defectus speculativi intellectus, adhibetur ei remedium per doctrinam; si autem practici intellectus, adhibetur ei remedium per consilium. Alio modo est defectus ex passione appetitivae virtutis, inter quos est maximus tristitia, cui subvenitur per consolationem. Tertio modo, ex parte inordinati actus, qui quidem tripliciter considerari potest. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)