354 Star (*Stella*)

Sometimes a star designates an angel because just like a star has a clear and pure substance, a huge measure, and a round figure, just so an angel has purity of essence, vivacity of power, and a proneness for obedience, as if a certain spiritual rotundity which is easily moved, Heb. 1[:14]: “Are they not all ministering spirits?”

Again, by a star is designated a spiritual man. Wherefore Hallaces says in the seventh book of *Perspective*,[[1]](#endnote-1) that stars in the east and west are more distant from us, yet they appear greater than when they are elevated in the middle of the heaven. So celestial men the more they ascend the more they humble themselves and make themselves small, according to that of Eccli. 3[:20]: “The greater you are, the more humble yourself in all things.” And Esth. [11:10}: “A little fountain grew into a very great river.” Gregory reports in the first book of *Dialogi*,[[2]](#endnote-2) concerning the monk Constantius, of body something small, but in humility great. To whom when a certain man desiring to see him said to him, he had nothing manly about him. That one devoutly embracing him in his kisses, he gave thanks to him, because he alone with open eyes looked on him. For rarely did it happen so that the degree of honor did not beget a swelling in the mind of the possessor. For according to Bernard,[[3]](#endnote-3) it is nothing great to be humble in rejection, but it is a great and rare virtue, for humility to be honored. Wherefore Gregory says,[[4]](#endnote-4) it is great honor not to seek, more to refuse what is offered, but the greatest is honor possessed.

1. Cf. Albert the Great, *Parva Naturalia* (Lugduni: Claudii Prost, 1651) Lib. 1, tract. 2 cap. 1 (5:300a): Et secundum hoc stella cum est in Oriente vel Occidente, longius distate a capitibus nostris quam quando est in Meridionali linea super Zenith capitum nostrum. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Gregory, *Dialogorum* 1.5 (PL 77:180): Quod ut vir Dei Constantius audivit, lampades quas reficiebat protinus laetus relinquens, concitus descendit, atque in ejusdem rustici amplexum ruit, eumque ex amore nimio constringere coepit brachiis, et osculari, magnasque gratias agere quod is de se talia judicasset, dicens: Tu solus in me apertos oculos habuisti. Qua ex re pensandum est cujus apud se humilitatis fuerit, qui despicientem se rusticum amplius amavit. Qualis enim quisque apud se lateat, contumelia illata probat. [Col.0180D] Nam sicut superbi honoribus, sic plerumque humiles sua despectione gratulantur. Cumque se et in alienis oculis viles aspiciunt, idcirco gaudent, quia hoc judicium confirmari intelligunt, quod de se et ipsi apud semetipsos habuerunt. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Bernard, *De Laudibus Virginis Matris* 4.9 (PL 183:84): Non magnum est esse humilem in abjectione; magna prorsus et rara virtus, humilitas honorata. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Gregory, *Moralia* 27.37.61 (PL 76:435): in hoc quidem mundo vivere, sed de hujus mundi concupiscentia nihil habere, aliena non appetere, propria non tenere, laudes mundi despicere, et pro Deo opprobria amare, gloriam fugere, despectum sequi, adulantes [Col.0436A] despicere, despicientes honorare, mala nocentium ex corde dimittere, et erga eos dilectionis gratiam immobilem in corde retinere. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)