Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

216 The Religious Man (*Religiosus*)

The religious man. In the religious three things are commended, namely, the gravity of maturity,

the love of the group, and the flight from property.

¶ Concerning the first, just as a money changer judges the better coin according to the weight, so the religious from the maturity, Psal. 34:18]: “I will praise you in a strong people.”

¶ Concerning the second, we see that when many are gathered, they proceed more securely, resist more forcefully, and live together more joyfully, Eccle. 4[:9]: “It is better that two should be together, than one.” On the other hand, we see that when a bird is alone and singular, it is either a raptor as a hawk, or it has lost its companion as a turtle dove. So, a singular religious is either rapacious taking in and fighting, or he has lost his spouse Christ, Eccle. 4[:10]: “Woe to him that is alone.” Therefore, in offering to the Lord it was to be done by offering a pair of

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turtle doves not just one turtle dove, Luke 2[:24].

¶ Third,[[1]](#endnote-1) the religious ought to avoid property lest he be like the bat drinking oil in the church while others are absent from the divine office like Judas, who having the purses was a thief, John 12[:4].

¶ Again,[[2]](#endnote-2) three matters are disapproved of in a religious person, irreverence, because such a one is like a cypress standing empty in a watery place like a fish always have water in its mouth but inside it is empty. Such a one next to bread dies, bread next to fire dies of cold, Psal. [33:11]: “The rich have wanted and have suffered hunger.” Second, he is condemned for a dissolute life and dishonesty in conversation, the dishonest layperson disgraces only himself. But the religious besmirches the whole monastery and his order. Just as by a sample of wine the whole cask is judged either for good or for ill, 1 Cor. 4[:9]: “We are made a spectacle to the world.” Third, wandering is reproved. For a fish quickly dies out of the water, so a religious out of his discipline.

¶ Again,[[3]](#endnote-3) the religious ought to castigate himself, not kill, obey his prelate, not to go outside to profit, not to be defective. Concerning the first, the eagle first retracts his wings afterwards he extends them more. So sometimes the discipline is remitted so that afterwards one may convalesce, Rom. 12[:1]: “Your reasonable service.”

¶ Concerning the second, the religious ought to obey. For just as members are judged to be paralytic or die off if they do not move at the command of the head, so religious if they do not follow the order of the father, [Exod. 15:16]: “Let them become unmovable as a stone.” And according to the Philosopher,[[4]](#endnote-4) everything containing moisture ends badly by its own termination and well in another. So, a religious is ruled badly if he follows his own motion. Wherefore Bernard,[[5]](#endnote-5) take away one’s own will and there will be no hell.

¶ Concerning the third, Gregory[[6]](#endnote-6) says in the way of God no one who sets out is deficient. For just as hardly are better men to be found than they who progress in monasteries. So hardly are worse than they who are lacking in monasteries, [*Decretum*], 47 Dist. c. [9] *Quantumlibet*.[[7]](#endnote-7) Wherefore just as a lay man begins a building and the structure is completed, so a religious in such a way ought to begin what he can complete and persevere lest perchance he be delayed in it, Luke 14[:30]: “This man began to build and was not able to finish.”

¶ Again, the religious ought to be educated under discipline just as boys, namely, have in their birth two midwives, and in

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nurture two mothers. During time two consolers.[[8]](#endnote-8)

¶ The first midwife in coming out is obedience which ties together his members, his hands of working, feet of affection, and wraps him in blankets of humility.

¶ The second midwife should be humility which lays him in the crib, and in the cradle of the cloister with a bundle of boys, that is, with a bridle of temperance and a halter of counsel. These are the two Hebrew midwives which conserved the marshes, that is, those wishing to live perfectly.

¶ Again, he ought to have two nurses in progress. First, truth which teaches him to speak, 1 Pet. 4[:11]: “If any man speaks, let him speak, as the words of God.” Second, let it be honesty which teaches him to walk, [1] Thes. 4[:11]: “That you walk honestly towards them that are without.” Again, let him have two consolers in going out. First charity to God and our neighbor, Heb. 13[:1]: “Let the charity of the brotherhood abide in you.” Second, austerity to oneself, [1] Cor. 9[:27]: “I chastise my body and bring it into subjection.”

¶ Again,[[9]](#endnote-9) the religious like to a plant ought to be eradicated and transplanted, shut up and watered, pruned and dug around, so the novice ought to be rooted out from the world, to be planted in religion, rooted in the holy proposal, shut up in circumspection, watered with devotion, pruned with confession, and dug around with exercise and good work, and cultivated, as they are according to Psal. [127:3; 143:12]: “As new plants in their youth.”

¶ Again,[[10]](#endnote-10) the religious ought to have just as a plant a deep root of humility, a stem of right intention, branches of sincere love, leaves of chaste speaking, flowers of honest associations, and finally above all fruit of good work, by which he can be recognized by God according to that of Matt. 7[:16]: “By their fruits you shall know them.” Psal. [127:3]: “Your children as olive plants, round about your table,” that is, of holy religion.

¶ Again,[[11]](#endnote-11) religion had a laudable origin, an imitable way, not yet notable.

¶ Concerning the first, Samuel first gathered the throng of the prophets, [1] Kings 10[:9-10]. John the Baptist gathered disciples, John 1[:6]. And Mark the evangelist at Alexandria had disciples of marvelous life.[[12]](#endnote-12) About which is read in the *Historia ecclesiastica,* book 2, c. 16,[[13]](#endnote-13) from which there arose the holy fathers and monks in Egypt of which kinds are the cenobites, hermits, and anchorites.

¶ Second, religion had a changeable way as is evident, Act. 4[:32] because none of their disciples said anything to be his of these things

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which they possessed, but they were all in common.

¶ Third,[[14]](#endnote-14) it has a notable manner because it is subject to obedience, alleviating poverty, and shining chastity. Because obedience takes away from the religious their own will and consequently hell. According to Bernard,[[15]](#endnote-15) take away one’s own will, and there will be no hell. Poverty takes away the cupidity of the world and consequently every evil according to that of [1] Tim. 6[:10]: “The desire of money is the root of all evils.” Chastity takes away carnal ugliness and consequently makes an angel according to that, Matt. 22[:30]: “They shall neither marry nor be married; but shall be as the angels,” etc. In any case one who will enter religion ought to dismiss the old age of worldly vices, just as the serpent who for this is renewed by a narrow aperture where he puts off his old skin.[[16]](#endnote-16) On account of this Bernard said when novices are entering, they leave their bodies outside, that is, corporal desires and they are only spirits who enter, because [John 12:24-25]: “Unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remains alone.” Thus, one entering religion unless he leaves the rigidity and infirmity of his previous life, he cannot bear fruit under the new life. For there are many who in the beginning of their entry pretend simplicity and sanctimony as if they always say the Psalms [118:1]. First hour, “Blessed are the undefiled,” but when they were made afterwards officials and obedientiaries they tend to change the old observances. And [Psal. 118:33] at their third hour, “Let before me a law.” And when they were long exercised and hardened in offices then they arrived at the sixth hour and say [Psal. 118:81]: “My soul has fainted after your salvation.” Because every devotion has receded from such ones and worldliness has succeeded away from God because around the ninth hour such things are heard from these kind [Psal. 118:129]: “Your testimonies.”

¶ Which however impede the reputation of religion. See above chapter [135] Physician (*Medicus*).

¶ But now I wish to know if the blessed thief in the end so that when he was penitent so easily obtained heaven, how the religious not persevering in penance, who as if with the three keys of obedience, poverty, and chastity, crucified with Christ is prepared for heaven, for whom he strives, that of Gal. [2:19]: “With Christ I am nailed to the cross.”

¶ But someone says if one delays, and I die such a cross of penance is a necessity of religion. Therefore, also involuntary, but if involuntary, therefore not beneficial,

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because according to Augustine,[[17]](#endnote-17) no one does good against his will, even if what he does is good. I respond, it does not follow, if what is involuntary because it is a necessity for a faithful man to render what he promised. However, this is not involuntary when he wishes to serve the faith. Just as it was a necessity that Christ suffered and however voluntarily, Isai. 53[:7]: “He was offered because it was his own will.” Also, it does not follow if something is involuntary for someone because therefore it is not beneficial for him.

¶ For an infant often is fed involuntarily and when that food is beneficial for him. Behold something is more to the proposition.

¶ There is another plainly evil that cannot be served unless it is cut off. However, he fears for himself because if free from his bonds he will be sent away, he will not tolerate his being cut off. However, he does not want to be tied down and thus it is fitting how he is not to be healed. In cutting off however he cries out against it. He threatens however he is healed by the cutting off. This one undergoes the cutting off involuntarily and however he perishes. So, in religion it happens that one out of infirmity of the flesh murmurs against the austerity of the order. However, that bond is [good] for him, namely, because thus he is purged from habitual vices as well as from evil honors because from the beginning, he placed himself freely in this necessary suffering according to that of Eccli. 6[25]: “Put your feet into her fetters and within the bonds of that one be tied to be saved. But someone says to this point it would be more gracious for God, but not professed in the world, freely and of his own accord he undergoes such things. I respond no as is evident in that example, two men promise me to serve, but one swears to me faithfully to serve. The second not. Both, however, served, but I am held more to the first. Again, in the same kind of sin both fall, the regular [of a religious order] and the secular. It corresponds that the regular sins more. Therefore, it would be better for him to serve the world. I respond in a similar sin the man sins more gravely of sound mind than a fool. And however, it is not better for a man that he be a fool than he be of sound mind.

¶ Again two men fall in a ditch but one deeper than the other, but not from this does it happen worse for him because he has a support but the other not. But one falling in religion has many helpers, but one falling in the world has many oppressors. Therefore Eccle. 4[:9-10]: “It is better therefore that two should be together, than one, for they have the advantage of their society. If one fall

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he shall be supported by the other. Woe to him that is alone, for when he falls, he has no one to lift him up.” Again, according to Anselm[[18]](#endnote-18) although the religious sins more gravely in falling than the secular, however he will have forgiveness more quickly if he repents. Again, if one gives to the Lord himself and his possessions and another only his possessions, the Lord is held to recognize him more quickly if he repents who gave himself and his possessions. Again, someone says if it is perilous to enter religion and fall, therefore it is better not to enter. I respond, if you cross a bridge you can fear lest you perish because you see others perishing. Should you not therefore cross? But it is better that you cross from the fact that you see there many cross safely. In this way if God would say to someone to enter heaven so that you may live with the angels, can such a one fear vainly lest if he entered he would fall with the reprobate angels? Thoughts of this kind are vain because it is more to be hoped concerning the mercy of God for standing upright than concerning our misery for falling.

¶ They also say that seculars can just as well go to heaven as religious because they can walk in a sufficiently narrow road outside of religion. I respond that it is not so easy. We see the example that when a horse is by itself it can walk through a sufficiently narrow way. But join it to a carriage or a cart behind it and you will see that willy nilly it is necessary that it hold to the worn way both foul and beautiful. So, the secular man not entwined with cares can live a sufficiently holy secular life. But join to him a wife with a family which in English is called a **longtarte** (a large baked dish) which hanging from the back make the way of God’s commandments diminutive. In the figure of this is the entry of the Pharaoh’s horses with their carriages and riders in the sea and the Lord drew back the waters of the sea upon them. However, the sons of Israel walked through the dryness in its midst. Where the religious can say that of the Psal. [19:8]: “Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we call upon the name of the Lord.”

1. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 4.1 (8:283b): Religiosus debet insuper fugere et cavere proprietatem: sicut enim vespertilio bibit oleum in Ecclesia, ubi laudant alii Deum; sic religiosus proprietarius, instar vespertilionis, bibit et furatur bona monasterii, ubi alii vacant laudibus et Dei servitio, sicut Judas, qui solus inter Apostolos pecuniam furatus est, ut dicitur in *Joanne*. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 4.1 (8:283b): Item nota, quod tria sunt reprobata specialiter in quolibet religioso, scilicet indevotio, dissolutio, et vagatio. Nam religiosus indevotus est sicut scirpus, vel juncus, aut mergus, qui interius est aridus, quod tamen stat in aqua vel loco aquoso. Item sicut piscis, qui semper bibit aquam, et cum aperitur venter, invenitur vacuus; talis juxta panem moritur fame, juxta fontem moritur siti, juxta ignem moritur frigore. Et de talibus dicitur in Psalmo: *Divites eguerunt, et esurierunt.* Est etiam reprobanda in religione dissolutio vitæ, et inhonestas in conversatione. Nam sæcularis inhoneste vivens, solum infamat seipsum; religiosus vero inhonestus et dissolutus infamat totum monasterium et ordinem suum. Nam sicut quando vinum proclamatur in villa, per vinum quod portatur in scypho judicant homines de toto vino, quod est in dolio; sic mundus per conversationem, quam videt in uno religioso, judicat omnes alios qui sunt in monasterio, vel in ordine suo, et hoc tam in bono, quam in malo. Unde dicit Apostolus: *Spectaculum facti sumus mundo* Est insuper in religioso valde reprobanda vagatio: sicut enim piscis non diu vivit extra aquam, sic religiosus vagabundus cito moritur per culpam. ... [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 4.1 (8:284a): Item nota, quod religiosus debet se castigare, non interficere; praelato obedire, non contradicere; et semper in bono proficere, non retrocedere. ... Sicut aquila retrahit alas, ut melius extendat, ... sic inter5dum remittenda et temperanda est disciplina, ut postea convalescat. Nam dicit Apostolus: *Rationabile sit obsequium vestrum*. Religiosus etiam suo praelato debet obedire humiliter, et non resistere. Sicut enim membra judicantur paralytica, quae non moventur ad imperium capitis; sic perversus est religiosus subditus, qui non sentit motume et imperium patris spiritualis. De talibus dicitur in *Exodo: Fiant immobiles quasi lapis.* Et sicut omne humidum, sicut dicit Philosophus, male terminatur termino proprio, et bane alieno; sic religiosus bene regitur, si observet praelati praeceptum, male vero, si sequatur propriae voluntatis votum. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption* 2.8 335a1-3 (Barnes 1:548): Earth has no power of cohesion without the moist. On the contrary, the moist is what holds it together; for it would fall to pieces if the moist were eliminated from it completely. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Bernard, *In Tempore Resurrectionis, ad Abbates* Sermo 3.3 (PL 183:290): Cesset voluntas propria, et infernus, non erit.

Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 4.1 (8:284a): Nam dicit Bernardus: “Tolle propriam voluntatem, et infernus non erit tibi.” Religiosus insuper debet semper proficere, et non retrocedere; et ideo a latioribus incipere debet, ut proficiendo ad altiora valeat pervenire. Nam dicit Gregorius: “In via Dei non proficere, deficere est.” Sicut enim aedificium in fundamento fit latius, et postmodum construendo fit strictius; sic religiosus talem perfectionem debet accipere, quod ad illam valeat addere, et in ea perseverare, ne illud evangelicum verbum contra ipsum: *Hic homo coepit aedificare, et non potuit consummare*, ut dicitur in Luca. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Cf. Gregory, *Registri* Epistola, 9.110 (PL 77:1040): Et dum vitia munerantur honore, in locum ultoris is qui fortasse fuerat ulciscendus adducitur; atque hinc sacerdotes non proficere, sed perire potius indicantur. Vulnerato namque pastore, quis curandis ovibus adhibeat medicinam?

Cf. Bernard, *Epistola* 385.1 (PL 182:588): Quisquis in [Col.0588A] schola Christi non proficit, ejus indignus est magis sterio, praesertim tamen ubi sumus, ubi nihil eodem statu permanet: et non proficere, sine dubio deficere est. Nemo proinde dicat: Satis est, sic volo manere, sufficit mihi esse sicut heri et nudius tertius. In via residet qui ejusmodi est: in scala subsistit, ubi neminem patriarcha vidit non ascendentem, aut descendentem (Gen. XXVIII, 12). [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Decretum, Dist. 45 c. 9, *Quantumlibet*: Casus: Non inueni meliores, quam qui in monasteriis profecerunt, nec deteriores, quam qui in monasteriis defecerunt. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. At this point F 128 adds: “about which see above in chapter [292] Boy (*Puer*),” and the following matters are to be found in that chapter of F 128. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 4.1 (8:284b-285a): Religiosus instar plantulae debet nutriri in disciplina, vel in religione. ... Plantulae vero de uno loco eradicantur, et in alio transplantatur, clauduntur, rigantur, purgantur, fodiuntur, et coluntur: sic novitius debet instar plantulae, de mundoi radicitus evelli, et in religione transplantari, et in sancto proposito radicari, circumspectione claudi, devotione rigari, confessione purgari, exercitio et occupatione fodi et excoli; et tales sunt *sicut novellae plantationes in juventute sua*, ut dicitur in Psalmo. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 4.1 (8:285a): debet habere ista sex, scilicet radicem profundae humilitatis, stipitem rectae intentionis, frondes sincerae dilectionis, folia honestae locutionis, flores pulchrae conversationis, et tandem super omnia fructus corum cognoscit eos Deus, sicut dicit Salvator in *Matthae* [Matth. 7:16]. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 4.1 (8:285a): Habet etiam religio ortum primordialem valde laudabilem. Unde nota, quod omnis religio et omnis spiritualis congregatio, vel fraternitas, habuit primo ortum a Samuele, qui congregavit *cuneum prophetarum*, ut dicitur in primo *Regum*. It ita dicit ibidem Magister historiarum. ... Tertio habuit ortum a Joanne Baptista, qui congregavit *discipulos*, ut dicitur in Joanne. ... Sexto habuit ortum a Marco Evangelista, quia apud Alexandriam discipulos vitae mirabilis habuit, ut habetur in Ecclesiastica Historia.... [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Cf. Eusebius Pamphilus, *Historia ecclesiastica* 2.16 (PG 20:174).

Cf. Eusebius Pamphilus, *Historia ecclesiastica* trans. Arthur Cushman McGiffert 2.16.1-2 (pp. 175-176): And they say that this Mark was the first that was sent to Egypt, and that he proclaimed the Gospel which he had written, and first established churches in Alexandria. And the multitude of believers, both men and women, that were collected there at the very outset, and lived lives of the most philosophical and excessive asceticism, was so great, that Philo thought it worth while to describe their pursuits, their meetings, their entertainments, and their whole manner of life. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Eusebius Pamphilus, *Historia ecclesiastica* 2.17 (PG 20:178): Religiosus instar plantulae debet nutriri in disciplina, vel in religione.

Cf. Eusebius Pamphilus, *Historia ecclesiastica*, trans. Arthur Cushman McGiffert 2.17.2-3 (pp. 176-178): And since he describes as accurately as possible the life of our ascetics, it is clear that he not only knew, but that he also approved, while he venerated and extolled, the apostolic men of his time, who were as it seems of the Hebrew race, and hence observed, after the manner of the Jews, the most of the customs of the ancients. In the work to which he gave the title, On a Contemplative Life or on Suppliants, after affirming in the first place that he will add to those things which he is about to relate nothing contrary to truth or of his own invention, he says that these men were called Therapeutæ and the women that were with them Therapeutrides. He then adds the reasons for such a name, explaining it from the fact that they applied remedies and healed the souls of those who came to them, by relieving them like physicians, of evil passions, or from the fact that they served and worshiped the Deity in purity and sincerity. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Cf. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 4.1 (8:285b): Habet insuper religio nodum regulantem valde notabilem, qui ipsam facit valde laudabilem. Est enim in ipsa triplex nodus valde laudabilis, scilicet nomen religionis obedientiae subjugantis, paupertatis alleviantis, et castitatis decorantis. Obedientia aufert religioso propriam voluntatem, et per consequens infernum, juxta illud Bernardi: *Tolle propriam voluntatem, et infernus non erit tibi*. [Bern., *de resurr. Dom*., serm. III, ante med.] ... juxta illud verbum Apostoli: *Radix omnium malorum est cupiditas.* Castitas aufert homini carnalem foeditatem, et per consequens facit eum angelum, juxta illud *Matthaei: Neque nubent, neque nubentur, sed erunt sicut angeli Dei in caelo*. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Bernard, *In Tempore Resurrectionis, ad Abbates* Sermo 3.3 (PL 183:290): Cesset voluntas propria, et infernus, non erit.

Cf. *Sermo* 3.3 (PL 183:289): Voluntatem dico propriam, quae non est communis cum Deo et hominibus, sed nostra tantum: quando quod volumus, non ad honorem Dei, non ad utilitatem fratrum, sed propter nosmetipsos facimus, non intendentes placere Deo et prodesse fratribus, sed satisfacere propriis motibus animorum. Huic contraria est recta fronte charitas, quae Deus est. Haec enim adversus Deum inimicitias exercens est, et guerram crudelissimam. Quid enim odit aut punit Deus **[Col.0290A]**praeter propriam voluntatem? [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. At this juncture F 128 adds: “About which see chapter [302] Prudence (*Prudencia*).” [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Augustine, *Confessions* 1.12 (19) (LCL 26:34-35): nemo autem invitus bene facit, etiamsi bonum est quod facit:

but no one can do good against their will, even if the thing they do is good in itself. [Note 54: [54An allusion to Socrates’ dictum “no intelligent (sophos) person believes that anyone willingly does wrong (ἐξαμαρτάνειν)”: Pl. Protagoras 345d–e.](https://www.loebclassics.com/view/augustine-confessions/2014/pb_LCL026.35.xml?rskey=GaqMoU&result=1#target_note_LCL026_35_54)] [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Anselm, [↑](#endnote-ref-18)