Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

26 Chastity (*Castitas*)

Chastity is “as the lily among the thorns,” [Can. 2:2]. It has a price among jewels, it holds its seat among the stars. For he holds the lily incorruptible, the worth priceless, its seat insurmountable.

¶ Concerning the first,[[1]](#endnote-1) it is said in Can. 2[:2]: “As the lily among

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thorns,” etc. In the lily are six leaves of snowy white and six seeds of a golden color.[[2]](#endnote-2) In the first six chastity of the flesh is designated, in the remaining the cleanness of the mind.

The first leaf[[3]](#endnote-3) is sobriety of nourishments. Wherefore Jerome,[[4]](#endnote-4) a virgin flees wine as poison, because Prov. 20[:1]: “Wine is a luxurious thing.”

The second leaf[[5]](#endnote-5) is a rugged habit. Wherefore Bernard,[[6]](#endnote-6) the sharper the thistle makes the softer cloth. Where against it is said that the children of Israel had fornicated with the Moabites because they were ornamented with delicate clothing, Num. 25[:1].

¶ The third leaf[[7]](#endnote-7) is activity of labor. For through the contrary leisure is the ornament of luxury, Ezech. 16[:49]: “This was the iniquity of Sodom, your sister, the fullness of bread and the idleness.”

The fourth leaf[[8]](#endnote-8) however is guardianship of the senses and particularly of seeing and hearing. The example in “Dina the daughter of Jacob went out to see the women” and she was raped, Gen.34[:1].

The fifth leaf[[9]](#endnote-9) is modesty of words, 1 Cor. 15[:33]: “Be not seduced,” by idle words. “Evil communications corrupt good manners.”

The sixth leaf[[10]](#endnote-10) is fleeing the occasion and opportunity, Gen. 19[:17]: “Neither stay in all the country about” the Jordan, nor in any place around the region. We see that the animals of the forest have more beautiful fur than the domestic animals. And [2] Kings 13[:10] it is read that Amnon corrupted his sister Thamar when she was alone in the chamber.

¶ Second,[[11]](#endnote-11) chastity has a price above all gems, Eccli. 26[:20]: “No price is worthy of a continent soul.” For chastity is treasure in dearest value. Therefore, it is to be loved, Matt. 13[:44]: “The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field.” It is a treasure in the most fragile vase; therefore, it is to be kept safe, 2 Cor. 4[:7]: “We have this treasure in earthen vessels.”

¶ Third,[[12]](#endnote-12) chastity has an excellent seat (*solium*), therefore it is figured by a great throne of ivory, [3] Reg. 10[:18]. For chastity like ivory is cold against concupiscence, it is white through innocence, it is solid (*solidum*) through perseverance. Wherefore note that if ivory in wrapped in a clean linen cloth, it preserves the cloth lest it be burned, through which it is designated that interior chastity of the mind preserves the body from heat.

¶ Again,[[13]](#endnote-13) that chastity has an abundance of fruit, because first,[[14]](#endnote-14) “[it bears fruit, and yields] the one a hundredfold, and another sixty, and another thirty,” Matt. 13[:23].

¶ Again second,[[15]](#endnote-15) a swift course, for in running, swimming, flying it binds itself to Christ, Apo. 14[:4]: “These follow the Lamb

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wherever he goes.” Again,[[16]](#endnote-16) it has the most beautiful crown because not only does it have a crown of substantial price but also it is accidentally of worth. And just as a flower drops by a single touch, so does chastity. And just as a flower in the presence of the sun is opened, at night it is closed, so chastity only before God is it in glory, 2 Cor. 1[:12]: “Our glory is this, the testimony of our conscience.”

¶ Again,[[17]](#endnote-17) chastity ought to have a studious enclosure, a precious belt, a beautiful picture.

¶ Again first,[[18]](#endnote-18) Can. 4[12]: “A garden enclosed, my sister.” Just as in a garden well closed, nothing can enter except from above. Thus, in a pure man nothing enters except heavenly desire. But if a garden is enclosed full of beasts, too little will it be of profit as an enclosure. Thus little, namely, is the corporal enclosure if inside the sensual movements are making noise. Therefore, it is said in the aforesaid authority, Can. 4[:12]: “A garden enclosed, a fountain sealed up,” because of purity of mind.

Concerning the second,[[19]](#endnote-19) Luke 12[:35]: “Let your loins be girt.” And Dan. 10[:5], he saw a man, and his loins were girded with “gold.” And Apo. 1[:13], he saw the “Son of man, girt about the breast with a golden girdle.” Which all are referred to as a double chastity of body and mind.

¶ Concerning the third,[[20]](#endnote-20) Gregory says[[21]](#endnote-21) that there is no work of good without purity. For just as the whiteness of material is the foundation and firmament of other colors, according to the Philosopher,[[22]](#endnote-22) thus the whiteness of spiritual chastity is as if the foundation of the other virtues.

¶ Again chastity is needed for merit, Gal. 5[:22]: “But the fruit of the Spirit.” Second as an example, a book uncorrupted is given as an exemplar not to be corrupted, [1] Tim. 4[:12]: “Be an example of the faithful in word,” etc. Third, as a teaching, just as a fountain of sweetness pours forth sweet water, Act. 24[:25]: “Paul treated of justice, and chastity,” as if saying, of fruitful matters and not of idle things, of useful matters not of subtle things.

¶ For chastity furnishes to man reputation. For a thing however much cleaner it is, so much the more precious, Wis. 4[:1]: “O how beautiful is the chaste generation with glory.” Second, it furnishes tranquility, of life. For where there are no gnawing worms, that is, carnal motions, one sleeps more quietly, [1] Tim 2[:2]: “That we may lead a quiet and a peaceable life in all piety and chastity.” Third, green wood

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is stronger to resist the fire than burnt to a charcoal and extinguished. And a thing uncorrupted is strong than one ruined, Judith 15[:11]: “Your heart has been strengthened, because you have loved chastity.” The example of the beaver that casts forth his genitals lest he be captured by the hunters. For Judith would have been captured had she not been chaste.

1. Gulielmus de Lancea, in Bonaventure, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:288b): Primo ergo castitas est florens sicut lilium; nam dicitur in *Canticis*: *Sicut lilium inter spinas, sic amica mea inter filias.* Et nota, quod in lilio sunt sex folia nivei coloris, et sex grana aurei coloris. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. At this juncture the later version, Worcester F 128, refers the reader to chapter [205] the Lily (*Lilium*). [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:288b): Primum folium est cibi et potus sobrietas, unde dicit Hieronymus: « Virgo fugiat vinum, ut venenum.» Nam vinum et adolescentia est duplex incendium voluptatis. Unde in *Proverbiis* dicitur: *Luxuriosa res est vinum;* [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Jerome, *Epistolae secundum ordinem temporum* 22.9 (PL 22:399): ut sponsa Christi vinum fugiat pro veneno. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:289a): Secundum folium est habitus asperitas; unde dicit Bernardus: « Memento, quod asperior cardo pannum facit leniorem .... [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Bernard, *Epistola* 322.1 (PL 182:527): asperior carduus [al. cardo, male] pannum faciat leniorem. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:289a): Tertium folium est laboris strenuitas; [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:289a): Quartum folium est custodia sensuum, et maxime quoad visum et auditum; quia curiositas videndi, vel audiendi , via est ad peccatum. Cujus exemplum patet in Dina filia Jacob, quae ad videndum mulieres regionis illius egressa, a Sichem filio Emor fuit corrupta, ut dicitur in *Genesi.* [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:289a): Quintum folium est modestia verborum, et   
   maxime immundorum; quia maxime excitatur luxuria per verba dissoluta et inhonesta. Nam   
   dicit Apostolus: *Nolite seduci inanibus verbis: corrumpunt enim bonos mores colloquia prava. ...* [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. William de Lancea, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:289a): Sextum folium est fuga occasionum, opportunitatum , et maxime raulierum. Dicitur enim in *Genesi*8 : *Ne stes in omni loco circa re-*   
    *gionem.* Videmus enim, quod animalia silvestria pulchriorem pellem habent, quam domestica. Legimus etiamin secundo *Regum,* quod Thamar ab Amon fratre suo fuit corrupta, quia in thalamo fuit sola cum solo. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. William de Lancea, Bonaventure, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:289b): Secundo castitas habet ingens pretium super omnes gemmas, quia dicitur: *Non est digna ponderatio continentis animce.* Et nota, quod castitas est thesaurus cum valore charitatis; ideo summe amandus, et ideo dicitur: *Simile est regnum calorum thesauro abscondito,* etc. Est thesaurus in vase fragilissimo; et ideo summe conservandus: nam dicit Apostolus : *Habemus thesaurum istum in vasis fictilibus.* [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. William de Lancea, Bonaventure, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:289b): Tertio, castitas habet excellens solium super omnes stellas, quod figuratur per *thronum de ebore grandem,* ut dicitur in libris *Regum* Et nota quod ebur est frigidum, et solidum, et candidum: frigidum, contra concupiscentiam; solidum, per firmam perseverantiam; candidum, per meram innocentiam. Item nota, quod quando ebur in uno panno lineo mundo involvitur, servat pannum ne incendatur: in quo signatur, quod interior castitas mentis servat corpus exterius ab incendio libidinis. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. William de Lancea, Bonaventure, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:289b): Item nota, quod castitas habet fructum uberrimum, cursum celerrimum, et sertum pulcherrimum. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. William de Lancea, Bonaventure, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:289b): Primo ergo castitas habet uberrimum fructum; et nota quod triplex est fructus evangelicus, scilicet tricesimus, quem habet castitas conjugalis; sexagesimus, quem habet castitas vidualis; centesimus, quem habet castitas virginalis, ut dicitur in *Matthaeo.*  [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. William de Lancea, Bonaventure, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:289b): Secundo castitas habet celerrimum motum: castitas enim consequitur Deum tripliciter, scilicet currendo, natando, et volando. Currit enim castus per bonam operationem; natat per internam devotionem; volat per supernam contemplationem: et sic *sequitur agnum quocumque ierit,* ut dicitur in *Apocalypsi.* [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. William de Lancea, Bonaventure, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:290a): Tertio, castitas habet pulcherrimum sertum: ... Et nota quod castitas instar floris solo tactu marcescit, quia tactus impudicffi deleclationis castitatem omnino corrumpit. Sicut enim flos, sole praesente, decorem suum ostendit (nam flos, ut videmus, de nocte clauditur, et oriente sole rursum cxpanditur), sic homo vere castus de castitate tantum coram Deo, non coram hominibus, gloriatur, dicente Apostolo: *Gloria nostra haec est, testimonium conscientia; nostrae.*  [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. William de Lancea, Bonaventure, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:290a): ltem nota, quod castitas indiget studiosa clausura; castitatem decet pretiosa cinctura; et in ea lucet speciosa pictura. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. William de Lancea, Bonaventure, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:290a-b): Primo ergo castitas debet habere clausuram studiosam; nam dicitur: *Hortus conclusus, soror mea sponsa.* Et nota, quod in horto bene clauso non potest quis intrare, nisi de alto: sic in homine casto, qui habet clausuram continentire, nullum desiderium debet intrare, nisi coeleste tantum. Si tamen hortus conclusus bestiis esset plenus, clausura parum proficeret; imo plus noceret, quam prodesset: ita quando bestiales motus libidinis strepunt in mente, parum aut nihil valet clausura castitatis in carne. Et ideo sponsffi dicitur non solum *hortus conclusus,* sed *fons signatus: Hortus conclusus,* propter castitatem carnis; *fons signatus,* propter puritatem mentis. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. William de Lancea, Bonaventure, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:290b): Secundo castitas debet habere cincturam pretiosam, quia dicitur: *Sint lumbi vestri pracincti, et lucernce ardentes in manibus vestris.* Et nota, quod Daniel vidit *virum accinctum renibus auro obrizo,* quod est aurum pretiosum valde, ... Nam zona aurea, vel cinctura renum, significat corpus castum; zona vero aurea inter mamillas, significat cor mundum; [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. William de Lancea, Bonaventure, *Diaetae salutis* 4.4 (8:290b): Tertio castitas debet habere picturam speciosam. Sicut enim candor materialis, vel albedo, est caput et fundamentum aliorum colorum, ut dicit Philosophus; sic castitas est quasi camit el fundamentum aliarum virtutum, et bonorum operum. Unde dicit Gregorius, quod «non est opus bonum sine castitate. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Gregory, *Homilia in Evangelia* 1.13.1 (PL 76.1124): nec opus bonum est aliquod sine castitate. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Aristotle, *Sense and Sensibilia* 3, 439b20-440a6 (Barnes 1:698). [↑](#endnote-ref-22)