

Works of St. Bonaventure



DEFENSE OF THE MENDICANTS

Introduction and Notes by Robert J. Karris, O.F.M.
Translation by José de Vinck and Robert J. Karris, O.F.M.

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ST. BONAVENTURE

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DEFENSE OF THE MENDICANTS

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The Franciscan Institute
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INTRODUCTION

Introductions are of various types, as they try to lead their readers into the text before them. While my Introduction will summarize a goodly amount of what Bonaventure says in his *Apologia pauperum*, it does so by a series of questions that the reader might ask. My answers to these questions will generally be brief and have the goal of persuading my readers to delve into the text of Bonaventure himself. In other words, I use my Introduction as a way of getting my readers to engage in the thought of the Seraphic Doctor and not in what an interpreter thought Bonaventure thought.

WHY DID ST. BONAVENTURE WRITE HIS *APOLOGIA PAUPERUM*?

Simply put, Bonaventure wrote his *Apologia pauperum* to defend and to promote the very existence of the Franciscan Movement. In other words, Bonaventure is writing to demonstrate how the poor friars practice and should live evangelical perfection, especially through evangelical poverty. Gone are the days when most friars were lay people. In Bonaventure's day most friars were well-trained priests and called by Bishops and especially by the Supreme Pontiff to care for souls. It became clear to scholars such as Gerard of Abbeville that these Franciscan priests did not fit the ecclesiastical mold. They should belong to the category of those to be perfected, but they were not monks, but priests. The bishops followed the ranks of the apostles, and diocesan or

secular priests followed the ranks of the Seventy-Two that the Lord had sent out. But how was one to categorize the friar priests who were not diocesan priests and who had been called to the care of souls by the Supreme Pontiff?¹ It is almost as if Gerard of Abbeville is saying: Fit the current ecclesiastical categories or be suppressed. Bonaventure's argument might be expressed simply: We don't fit the present ecclesiastical categories, for the movement of the Spirit and the decisions of the Supreme Pontiffs have made them obsolete. Put another way, the traditional way of understanding the sending of the Apostles and of the Seventy-Two must be updated. Dionysius's view of hierarchy must also be updated to accord with present ecclesiastical realities.²

¹ Bonaventure's *Apologia pauperum* builds upon his earlier *Disputed Questions on Evangelical Perfection*. See, for example, Question II, Article II, n. 1, "Reply to the subsequent arguments made for the negative position" in *Disputed Questions on Evangelical Perfection*. Introduction and Notes by Robert J. Karris; Translation by Thomas Reist and Robert J. Karris, WSB XIII (Saint Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2008), 137-41 where on p. 140 Bonaventure argues from 1 Cor 12:28 that the friars engaged in the care of souls are "helpers," who enjoy "sub-authority" from those who send them. As the Glossa on 1 Cor 12:28 reads: "*Services of help*, that is, those who assist others greater than themselves, such as Titus helping the Apostle and an archdeacon helping bishops." In chapter 2 of his *De periculis*, William of Saint-Amour acknowledges this category. See William of Saint-Amour, *De periculis novissimorum temporum*, Edition, translation and introduction by G. Geltner, Dallas Medieval Texts and Translations 8 (Paris/Leuven/Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2008), 53: "Now, should someone object (that bishops succeed the apostles and parish priests succeed the Seventy-Two), invoking the case of archdeacons or vicars, who exercise the care of souls instead of others, we say that in the church such men possess the power of aides, that is, helpers of their superiors.... No one in the church, therefore, has care over souls other than the bishops and the parish priests or their aides, that is, those assisting them, whether legitimately constituted or summoned by them." For more on the relationship between Bonaventure's thought in his *Apologia pauperum* and *Quaestiones disputatae de perfectione evangelica* see Jan van den Eijnden, "Bonaventure Twice on Evangelical Poverty: A Theologian with two Handwritings," *Collectanea Franciscana* 70 (2000): 5-42.

² William of Saint-Amour updated Dionysius's view of hierarchy by placing "regular men" (friars minor) among the monks. See chapter 2 of his *De periculis*, 56-57.

On a more linear level I note that Gerard of Abbeville began this new round of polemic between the seculars and the mendicants with a sermon preached in the Franciscan church on January 1, 1269.³ Bonaventure's *Apologia pauperum contra adversarium*, composed in the autumn of 1269, is his response to Gerard of Abbeville's *Contra adversarium perfectionis christianae, maxime prelatorum facultatumque ecclesiasticarum inimicum* (*Against an Adversary of Christian Perfection, an enemy especially of prelates and ecclesiastical resources*) which was composed in the summer of 1269.⁴ In his work Gerard of Abbeville utilizes some of the material found in William of Saint-Amour's *De periculis novissimorum temporum* (*About the Dangers of the Last Times*)⁵ and in his *Collectiones sacrae et canonicae scripturae ad defensionem ecclesiasticae Hierarchiae et preparationem simplicium fidelium Christi contra pericula imminencia Ecclesiae generali per hypocritas, pseudo-praedicatores et penetrantes domos, et otiosos et curiosos et gyrovagos* (*Collections of sacred and canonical writings for the defense of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and for the preparation of the simple faithful of Christ against the dangers that are imminent for the entire Church because of hypocrites, pseudo-preachers, and those who make their way into houses, and the idle and the meddling and the*

³ An annotated translation of this sermon may be found in an Appendix to this book.

⁴ See *Tractatus Gerardi de Abbatisville "Contra adversarium perfectionis christianae,"* ed. Sophronius Clasen (Florence-Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1939), 11. This work was a response to Thomas of York's *Manus quae contra Omnipotentem tenditur* (*The Hand that is posed against the Almighty*) which was composed in the summer of 1256. See A.G. Traver, "Thomas of York's Role in the Conflict Between Mendicants and Seculars at Paris," *Franciscan Studies* 57 (1999): 179-202.

⁵ See ch. VIII, n. 1, 221-22 below of Bonaventure's *Apologia pauperum* where he attacks Gerard of Abbeville for using William of Saint-Amour's *De periculis* which had been condemned by the Holy See: "Placing as he does abundant temporal goods at the summit of evangelical perfection and accusing of imperfection and superstition the state of voluntary poverty, he proves himself a disciple of the man who calumniated the Orders of preachers and mendicant poor in a defamation that was condemned by the Apostolic See."

gyrovagues).⁶ In my footnotes I have provided many lengthy translations of Gerard of Abbeville's *Contra adversarium*, so that readers might see first hand what Gerard of Abbeville is saying and how Bonaventure responds to him. I also refer readers to this book's Appendix where, in Gerard of Abbeville's January 1, 1269 sermon, they will see his thought in full bloom and devoid of any Bonaventurian polemic. I also point the interested reader to the recent translation by G. Geltner of William of Saint-Amour's *De periculis novissimorum temporum*.⁷

WHAT IS BONAVENTURE'S *APOLOGIA PAUPERUM* ALL ABOUT?

In this point I look once again at the *Apologia pauperum* from a global perspective, but do so from an angle different from that taken in my previous section. It seems to me that the title of this work, *Defense of the Mendicants*, at least as it is normally understood, does not do justice to its twelve chapters. As a matter of fact, the reader has to wait until the last sections of Chapter XII (n. 12-41) for Bonaventure's relatively brief treatment of the begging or mendicancy of the friars minor. Thus, I have generally translated *pauper* by "poor" and *mendicantes pauperes* by "mendicant poor." Plain and simple, this work deals with evangelical perfection and

⁶ For an eminently clear summary of this controversy see Louis Duval-Arnould, "Mendicants and Seculars, Quarrel of" in *Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages II K-Z*, ed. Andre Vauchez, et al, trans. by Adrian Walford (Chicago and London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2000), 939. See also Decima L. Douie, "St Bonaventura's Part in the Conflict between Seculars and Mendicants at Paris," in *S. Bonaventura 1274-1974* Volume II, ed. Jacques G. Bougerol (Grottaferrata: Collegio S. Bonaventura, 1973), 585-612, esp. pp. 601-12.

⁷ William of Saint-Amour, *De periculis*. See now G. Geltner, "William of St. Amour's *De periculis novissimorum temporum*: A False Start to Medieval Antifraternalism?" in *Defenders and Critics of Franciscan Life: Essays in Honor of John V. Fleming*, ed. Michael F. Cusato and G. Geltner, *The Medieval Franciscans 6* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2009), 105-18.

the pursuit of evangelical perfection by the friars minor. Bonaventure does not think that the friars minor have a corner on perfection. Nor does he downplay the perfection of the hierarchy.⁸ Bonaventure argues that Christ, the uncreated and the incarnate Word, is the exemplar of all perfection and that there is in him a twofold principle of exemplarity, that is, eternal and temporal. He continues:

On the one hand, from this single and undivided eternal Exemplar there flows such a variety of created natures and such a variety of perfections in these natures, according to the degree of their participation in the supreme Good itself, that all cannot be possessed perfectly by any given creature. For this reason God established diverse species of beings, so that the universe would be complete. On the other hand, the diverse states, levels, and orders are derived in their exemplarity from the Incarnate Word, as from the original principle of grace ‘of whose fullness we have all received,’⁹ and as from a mirror in which and from which shines forth the fullness and beauty of all holiness and wisdom. Diverse states, degrees, and orders are derived from him according to the various distributions of the gifts and the various manners in which the Exemplar is to be imitated. To them the manifold perfection of Christ is distributed according to a multiform participation in such a way that it is found at the same time in all things. And yet it does not shine in any one of them in the fullness of its universal plenitude, but each state and degree, according

⁸ See the Appendix, n. 20, 385-86 below where Gerard of Abbeville states: “Wherefore, let us together enter along the way of truth, and let us believe both faithfully and with humble heart ‘unto justice, and with our mouth,’ let us make profession ‘unto salvation’ that the height and apex of ecclesiastical dignity and perfection consist in the office or in the state of pastoral rule.”

⁹ See John 1:16.

to its measure, receives the influence from such exemplarity and moves forward to imitate it.¹⁰

Bonaventure uses the first three chapters to lay the foundations of his consideration of evangelical perfection. The next three chapters do not discuss mendicancy at all, but talk about the deep love that the perfect individual must have for Jesus Christ. Chapter V deals with abstinence and Chapter VI considers fasting, both of which provide a strong bulwark for the structure of evangelical perfection. Chapters VII-IX highlight the key role of evangelical poverty in evangelical perfection. The final three chapters are more overtly polemical and defend the very life of the friars minor.

I am not going to insult the intelligence of my readers by providing an extensive outline of each chapter of Bonaventure's rich, but at times dense text. I would suggest that my readers begin with Chapters III, VII, and XII. There are three benefits from reading these chapters first. First, the reader will see how Bonaventure deals with the thrust of Gerard of Abbeville's work, whose full title in English is *Against an Adversary of Christian Perfection, an enemy especially of prelates and ecclesiastical resources*. In an Appendix I have supplied an annotated translation of Gerard of Abbeville's Sermon in which he clearly argues that the prelates are perfect and that others are to be made perfect. In his *Apologia pauperum* Bonaventure assaults this position by saying, in essence, that it is obsolete and stems from a time when "those to be made perfect" were untrained laymen who were monks and not literate priests. He goes on to quote Dionysius that "to cleanse, enlighten, and make perfect pertains to the priestly order." He concludes: "In addition, the profession of poor persons of this kind is greatly different from the profession of the monks, and what is more important still they do not perform the hierarchizing works of cleansing, enlightening, and perfecting on their own authority, but on that of Ordinary Bishops and most of all, on that of the Sovereign Pon-

¹⁰ See ch. II, n. 12, 62 below of *Apologia pauperum*.

tiff whose authority transcends all positive rights” (ch. XII, n. 10, 333 below). Bonaventure is writing in 1269 when the vast majority of the friars were priests, who engaged in the ministry of cleansing, enlightening, and perfecting because the local Bishop or the Supreme Pontiff authorized them to do so. In ch. III, n. 21-26, 87-93, Bonaventure will make additional appropriate distinctions between the perfection of prelates and the perfection of the friars minor.

Second, in ch. III, VII, and XII readers will clearly see that Bonaventure upholds tradition and canon law as he argues that prelates and the church legitimately have resources to take care of the needs of the clergy and the poor. At the same time, however, Bonaventure emphasizes the fact that the state of being a prelate exposes one to many temptations. As he says in ch. III, n. 25, 91:

Now the state of religious life is open to sinners and the imperfect, so that it might render them just and lead them to perfection. And so, although the state of being a prelate is higher in perfection, nevertheless the state of religious life is more secure and more effective in curing our illnesses, for it rescues us from the many dangers to which the state of being a prelate exposes us, especially because of the honors connected with it.

Third, in ch. VII Bonaventure presents a most lucid consideration of evangelical poverty and provides an attractive Christology as its basis and argues that poverty of spirit is the foundation of evangelical perfection (n. 3). He also distinguishes two aspects of the possession of temporal goods – that is, ownership and use and states:

Evangelical poverty consists in renouncing the dominion and ownership of earthly things, but not their use which must be limited in accordance with what the Apostle said to Timothy: ‘Having food and suffi-

cient clothing, let us be content with these' (n. 3, 178 below).

Bonaventure concludes his consideration of the fact that Christ had a money bag in this way:

So the money bag of Christ should not be used to incite avarice, but as an example of mercy and poverty. Just as there was nothing of temporal glory or pleasure in our crucified Savior, so also he did nothing and taught nothing that might show that the riches of the world were to be sought. On the contrary, in order to inflame us with the love of perfect poverty, Christ came as the poorest, born of the poorest mother when he entered the world to assault the enemy's stronghold (n. 40, 220 below).

And as we know from n. 1, 176 below, the enemy's stronghold is the city of Babylon whose foundation is avarice.¹¹

WHAT DID THE POLEMIC OF BONAVENTURE AND GERARD OF ABBEVILLE LOOK LIKE?

We are used to the terms of our own contemporary political polemic in which one side of a debate may demonize their opponents or challenge their patriotism or their ability to stay the course or their lack of consistency as they flip-flop in their viewpoints on critical issues. The medieval polemic of Bonaventure and Gerard of Abbeville challenges the faith, understanding, and knowledge of the opponent: "If my honorable opponent were truly knowledgeable in matters of Sacred Scripture or the tradition of the Holy Fathers, he would

¹¹ See also Attilio Stendardi, "Introduzione" in *San Bonaventura La difesa dei poveri contro il calunniatore*, Traduzione, note e indici di Silvana Martignoni, Introduzione di Attilio Stendardi, Sancti Bonaventurae Opera XIV/2 (Rome: Città Nuova, 2005), 7-63.

never have said such a foolish thing. I pray daily for his conversion.” I give three examples from each author. As readers work their way through Bonaventure’s *Apologia pauperum*, they will spot many more examples of the Seraphic Doctor’s incisive polemic.

In ch. I, n. 11, 47 below of his *Apologia pauperum* Bonaventure concludes:

And if, overcome by God’s mercy, which we hope and earnestly pray for, he now humbly desires to ponder these arguments in the right way, he will not attempt to worsen his crime through some further heretical depravity, but will endeavor to correct himself and deplore his error.

In ch. VI, n. 20, 172-73 below Bonaventure concludes:

We have spoken at great length in praise of fasting, so that the man who is wise according to the flesh may also be instructed in his intellect and inflamed in his affections. Thus, recognizing his error, he may turn ‘to the Lord with fasting and weeping and mourning.’ We offer to the Father of mercies the sacrifice of devout prayer on his behalf, so that, just as we have wept so far over his subversion, we may rejoice in the future over his conversion.

In ch. IX, n. 5, 253 below Bonaventure comments:

When our author adduces the example of Daniel selling all his belongings, since he did not obtain this information from the authoritative Scriptures, he would not have dared to cite this example if he had been endowed with the wisdom of the same Daniel.

In the opening paragraph of his *Contra adversarium*, 11 Gerard of Abbeville writes:

Some people are so filled with presumption, loving and pleasing themselves, that they have taken upon themselves to preach not Christ's righteousness, but their own. For while the Apostle says, 'Be imitators of me as I am of Christ,' they, on the contrary, state: 'Be imitators of me in those matters in which I am not an imitator of Christ.'

See also Gerard of Abbeville's sermon, n. 3, 372 below in the Appendix:

Wherefore, the person who claims as his own a more excellent state than that of the Roman church is to be censured as a heretic. O immense insanity! O shameless fantasy! O insane desire for vain praise and empty glory that the feet stomp on the Head! Such carryings-on are what mimes and actors do, not what Christians do!

See also n. 14, 382 below in Gerard of Abbeville's sermon: "O brother, you have been thinking with exceeding pride and have grown dull by thinking thoughts that are too high."

HOW SHOULD ONE INTERPRET AND APPLY OLD TESTAMENT TEXTS TO CONTEMPORARY ISSUES?

The primary tools available to both Gerard of Abbeville and Bonaventure for doing theology were: the Sacred Scriptures, commentaries on Sacred Scripture, especially those of the Fathers, the various Glossae on Sacred Scripture, canon law, and reason. As readers work their way through Bonaventure's *Apologia pauperum*, they will notice that he is often at odds with Gerard of Abbeville's interpretation of the Old Testament. I will give three pertinent examples and then draw some conclusions from them.

The first example stems from ch. V, n. 16-17, 131-34 below where Bonaventure counters the arguments that Gerard of Abbeville mounts for abandoning abstinence. I quote from n. 16-17, 131-33:

Now, so that he can more effectively induce people to abandon abstinence, he buttresses his position with examples from the Saints, namely, Noah, Elijah, and John the Baptist: 'The first of these accepted every type of meat for his use. The second was fed with meat while the third was not defiled by eating locusts.' ... Now if this man were trying to teach by this that food of this kind, used in circumstances of place and time, is not contrary to perfection, but compatible with it, he would still be telling the truth, but blowing hot air, since no Catholic denies it.... Now if he tries to persuade his readers that to eat these foods and to abstain from them is equally perfect, he is in no little error.... The second reason is that his reasoning is sophistic and invalid, for he argues that if perfect men did something, that action, in and of itself, is perfect.... But it could be argued on the same basis that the following actions of Noah were perfect: his getting married, his possession of property, and his planting of a vineyard. We will keep our mouths shut about his drinking of wine.

It is clear that Bonaventure uses Catholic tradition and logic to argue against Gerard of Abbeville's position against abstinence. It is also clear that he will not allow Gerard of Abbeville's naïve interpretation of the Saints of the Old Testament to stand. Bonaventure argues: If we allow Gerard of Abbeville's interpretation of this one action of a perfect man, Noah, then we have to say that all the actions of this perfect man were perfect. Behind his humorous statement, "we will keep our mouths shut about his drinking of wine," Bonaventure discretely cloaks Noah's actions of getting drunk and becoming naked (Genesis 9:21).

A second instance is found in ch. VIII, n. 2-6, 222-28 below where Bonaventure argues against Gerard of Abbeville who holds up the Levites of the Old Testament as models of evangelical perfection. In number 2, 222-23 Bonaventure states:

Now the crux of his argument consists in this that the form of evangelical perfection existed beforehand in the Levites, to whom the Lord attributed tithes, first-fruits, and offerings for their livelihood, cities in which to live, and fields around them to feed their livestock. Now since the New Testament does not contradict the old, but is in harmony with it, because 'a wheel was in the midst of a wheel,' in no way does the perfection of the new law consist in the lack of possessions of this kind. Rather they were to be possessed as the Lord's gift. Now such an opinion, which this man promotes with tortuous verbiage, not only is clearly untrue, but it also contradicts his own statements.

In ch. VIII, n. 3, 224 below Bonaventure continues his argument against Gerard of Abbeville by quoting from Hebrews 10:1:

'For the Law, having but a shadow of the good things to come, and not the exact image of the objects is never able ... to perfect those who draw near.' The Glossa comments on this verse: 'The Law alone, having just a shadow, cannot make priests perfect in virtue and good.' For the perfection of the evangelical virtues and counsels is not found in the literal observance of the Law's commands and in the manner of life required of its priests because these are merely their figure and shadow.

In n. 4, 225 below Bonaventure returns to an argument he had used earlier with regard to the perfect man, Noah:

The very same arguments invoked to prove that evangelical perfection had existed originally in the ownership of property by the Levites may be used to demonstrate the same perfection in their wives, their sacrifices, and their other practices. If this were true, the priests of the New Law, in order to be perfect, would have to have wives, to offer goats and calves, and to be the first to proceed with trumpets on the battlefield. All this is absurd.

Having quoted the authority of Jerome extensively, Bonaventure concludes in n. 6, 227:

By these words Jerome clearly teaches that, as wealth and marriage were suited to the conditions of the Old Testament, so poverty and chastity are suited to the perfection of the New Law. Thus, just as virginity, introduced by Christ, did not destroy the Law, but fulfilled it, so too the counsel of poverty did not destroy the Law, but consummated it, because in the Law of the Gospel the counsels do not contradict the precepts. Rather they add to the perfection of righteousness. And so, as it is unreasonable to locate the model of perfect chastity in the wives of the levitical priests, so it is contrary to sound doctrine to locate the perfection of poverty in levitical possessions.

In this set of arguments against the positions of Gerard of Abbeville Bonaventure again applies logic and church tradition, especially as voiced by St. Jerome. A new argument for us readers is Bonaventure's use of the Epistle to the Hebrews: the Law is but a shadow of the good things to come. The Law cannot make priests perfect in virtue. Literal observance of the Law is not required, for the Law is to be understood in a spiritual sense.

The third and final example of Gerard of Abbeville's use of the Old Testament stems from ch. IX, n. 2-7, 250-56 where Bonaventure argues against his use of the example of the

Patriarchs who had rooted out avarice from their souls. In n. 2, 250 below Bonaventure writes:

He means that renunciation of riches is counseled for the sake of rooting out avarice. "To those out of whom it has already been rooted, the dispensing of temporal goods is rightly entrusted as to men who know how to use them properly and who seek not their own interests, but those of Jesus Christ."

He supports his viewpoint by offering as examples, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, David, Daniel – that is, the Patriarchs of the Old Testament. In n. 5-7, 253-55 Bonaventure makes his case against Gerard of Abbeville's use of the example of the Patriarchs.

When this man calls upon the examples of the Patriarchs, it does not aid his cause. First, because they did not abandon their property.... The second reason why the examples of the Patriarchs are not probative is that, while they were perfect in virtue, they indulged in some external practices that conformed to the exigencies of their time, but that cannot be taken as models of perfection. For instance, the Patriarchs had many wives; David was prone to war; Elijah slaughtered the prophets of Baal. Although they may have preserved their perfection while doing these things, yet they should be proposed to perfect men as objects of admiration rather than of imitation.... Furthermore, the third reason why these examples are useless is that many things happened to the Patriarchs as a type and shadow and are not consonant with perfection in the time of revealed truth. That is why there is no small absurdity in taking them as examples for the present.

In this final example Bonaventure again uses the logic of "reducing his opponent's argument to absurdity." In n. 7, 255-

56 he invokes Pseudo-Bernard: If today we do not slaughter rams in sacrifice as Abraham did, why should we follow his practice of accumulating riches? When truth has been revealed, these former practices must cease. As we saw in the second instance above, Bonaventure argues that when reality and truth have arrived in Jesus Christ, then the type and shadow must pass away. Indeed, the Patriarchs should be admired, but not imitated.

In conclusion, readers will often find Bonaventure and Gerard of Abbeville, as seen through Bonaventure's text, arguing a point in the present from examples from the Old Testament. In his arsenal of argumentative weapons Bonaventure uses logic, tradition, and the understanding that the Old Testament is a type or figure of what was to come and should be interpreted spiritually, not literally.

WHY DOES BONAVENTURE MAKE SO MANY DISTINCTIONS?

Bonaventure makes many helpful and sound distinctions to clarify complicated issues. From the many distinctions that Bonaventure employs in his *Apologia pauperum*, I single out two famous ones. In ch. XI, n. 5, 307-08 Bonaventure makes a helpful fourfold distinction in his treatment of the poverty of the Friars Minor:

So in order to silence these and similar malicious and deceitful sophisms, we have to understand that four matters must be considered in dealing with temporal goods, namely, ownership, possession, usufruct and simple use. Now the life of mortals can lack the first three, but necessarily needs the last one ...

By making such a distinction, Bonaventure aptly argues that the Friars have the simple use, not the ownership of or dominion over the goods they use. In n. 11, 314 he concludes:

Christ, the sun of justice, who, since he is the original source of natural, civil, canon, and divine law, sanctioned with his sacred word the principle that it was fitting for the perfect to renounce dominion over temporal things, but also conceded, promised, and provided sufficiency as regards their use. Furthermore, in order to confirm by example what he had taught by word, he chose to be sustained with food that belonged to another, as the story of the Gospel recounts.

In ch. XII, n. 2-11, 324-34 Bonaventure argues that God has called and the Sovereign Pontiff has confirmed the friar priests as fellow laborers, in those things that pertain to the salvation of souls, with Christ's priests who have the care of the flock. In n. 3, 324-25 below he makes a distinction that is often commented upon:

The principal work of the priestly office is to lead back to God the people under their authority by means of a sevenfold hierarchical action, that is, giving instruction to believers, restoring virtues, setting forth examples, interceding through prayers, taking care of injuries inflicted by enemies, warning against insidious dangers, and repelling actual assaults. Now there are seven metaphors in Sacred Scripture that describe these sevenfold priestly works, namely, builder, farmer, shepherd, intercessor, physician, watchman, and leader.

Bonaventure concludes this part of his argument by saying in n. 7, 330:

The Lord suggests that good priests must not only patiently tolerate, but earnestly desire preachers of the Gospel (that is, the friars) who will assist them in reaping the abundance of God's harvest.

In n. 10-11, 332-34 Bonaventure takes his argument to another plane and goes against the opinion of teachers such as Gerard of Abbeville that there are two kinds of perfection, namely, that of the prelate who is perfect and makes perfect and that of those who are to be cleansed, enlightened, and perfected. Bonaventure holds that the friars are not monks who need to be cleansed, enlightened, and perfected. Rather they perform the hierarchizing works of cleansing, enlightening, and perfecting, not on their own authority, but on that of Ordinary Bishops and most of all, on that of the Sovereign Pontiff whose authority transcends all positive rights (see n. 10, 332-33).

In conclusion, it does not seem possible that Bonaventure could have written *Apologia pauperum* without making distinctions that clarify, persuade, and rebut.

HOW ARE CHRISTIANS TO IMITATE CHRIST'S DEEDS?

It seems that one of the persistent arguments between Gerard of Abbeville and Bonaventure deals with the question of how Christians are to imitate Christ's deeds. Let me first lay down Bonaventure's general principle that in Christ, the uncreated and incarnate Word, there is a twofold principle of exemplarity, namely, eternal and temporal. Then I will give two examples.

In ch. II, n. 12, 62 Bonaventure utilizes his principle of exemplarity to explain the diverse orders, states, and levels in the Church. He states:

Diverse states, degrees, and orders are derived from him (Christ) according to the various distributions of the gifts and the various manners in which the Exemplar is to be imitated. To them the manifold perfection of Christ is distributed according to a multiform participation in such a way that it is found at the same time in all things. And yet it does not shine in any one

of them in the fullness of its universal plenitude, but each state and degree, according to its measure, receives the influence from such exemplarity and moves forward to imitate it.¹²

At first blush ch. IV, on imitating Christ who fled, has little to do with evangelical perfection. But upon closer reflection readers realize that the entire argument of ch. IV turns upon the question of the imitation of Christ, which, in turn, forms the basis for evangelical perfection. Gerard of Abbeville “tries to show that to flee from death is perfect in itself since it was commanded by Christ and practiced by perfect men” (n. 5, 100 below) and treats of six types of flight and praises the last four: “In these four ways Christ fled and taught such flight and the most perfect men have imitated him in this and have taught others to do so” (n. 20, 112 below). Bonaventure counters that such an interpretation of Christ’s actions goes against the teaching of the Apostle Paul who suffered out of love for Christ (see n. 1, 96-97 below). It goes against Christian tradition expressed by Hugh who says that love is “a transformative power” (n. 2, 97 below).

So a person who perfectly loves Christ intensely desires, with a special affect of the mind, to be conformed to him, especially in those things that the divine law dictates. In the state of our present misery the means of conformation to Christ most fitting for those to be

¹² In ch. VII, n. 16, 194 below, Bonaventure applies this principle to poverty: “From such clear and evident testimonies from holy teachers ... an irrefutable conclusion may be drawn: not only is it permissible, but praiseworthy and perfect, to imitate Christ and the apostles, not only in their renouncing of property, but even in their extreme want of temporal goods, which consisted in the absence of possessions and money. We should not or cannot conclude, however, that when ownership of things has been given up, possessions of things in common would be an imperfection. The reason for this is that just as in the perfection of chastity there are different modalities that in their varied special qualities surround Holy Mother Church as with a variety of adornments, so too it should be understood that the perfection of poverty is not always the same...”

saved consists in imitating his passion and death (n. 2, 97-98 below).

Finally, Bonaventure reduces the argument of Gerard of Abbeville to absurdity. Surely, in special circumstances one may flee martyrdom. But seen in the real world, Gerard of Abbeville's teaching is one of discouragement, especially when one considers Christian life as that of a soldier ready to follow the apostolic bugle and go into the battle of sufferings set before him. As Bonaventure concludes:

... we are showing that excessive, vain, and false praise of flight is to be fled from as pernicious and contrary to perfect virtue, since, while error is always and everywhere to be avoided, it is especially to be avoided when and where it appears under the false guise of holiness and brings a person down from the summit of virtue and plummets him into the abyss (n. 20, 113 below).

In brief, Bonaventure is arguing against the simple equation: Christ did this, so his followers must do the same at all times and in all places and under all circumstances.

My second example deals with the fact that Christ had a money bag. Bonaventure addresses this practice of Christ at length in two chapters. In ch. X, n. 1-5, 9, 281-87, 292-93 he argues against Gerard of Abbeville's contention that all followers of Christ must have a money bag because "no disciple is above his teacher" (Matthew 10:24). Bonaventure brings Matthew 10:9-10 to bear on this practice, for in this passage Jesus commands "Do not keep ... money in your belts ... nor sandals..." And individuals in the Church have understood this passage literally and walk barefoot and have no money bag, thus obeying the Lord's command and imitating the Apostles (n. 4, 284-85). Bonaventure concludes:

and thus, if anyone tries to adapt the divine words of being barefooted or lacking a money bag in such a

way that he construes from the Scriptures that such things are prescribed as necessary for salvation, as if no one could be saved who did not walk barefoot and did not possess a money bag, that person is doubly mistaken. On the contrary, if anyone tries to adapt the expression of the divine will to these things as being counsels and supererogatory and beneficial for salvation, that person should be considered, not a heretic, but a true disciple of Christ, not as a Manichean, but as a true Christian (n. 5, 285 below).

In ch. VII, n. 35, 214-15 below, Bonaventure looks at Christ's money bag from a different perspective:

The only-begotten Son of God, being rich towards all, became poor for our sakes, so much so that he had to depend on others for food.... Indeed, Christ had a money bag for the consolation of the weak, the confusion of the wicked, and the formation of the perfect.

In dealing with "the formation of the perfect," Bonaventure quotes Chrysostom:

'How is it that he prohibited the use of wallet, staff, and money when he carried around a money bag? To take care of the poor so that you might learn that great care must be extended to the most destitute and those hard pressed in this life, for Christ did many things for the purpose of instructing us.'

Bonaventure then continues:

By these words Chrysostom shows that it is fitting for perfect men to care for the destitute. This is especially true for the prelates of the Church, for it is in accord with their perfection that they strive to care for the flocks entrusted to them both spiritually and temporally (n. 38, 217 below).

In n. 40, 220 below, Bonaventure concludes:

So the money bag of Christ should not be used to incite avarice, but as an example of mercy and poverty. Just as there was nothing of temporal glory or pleasure in our crucified Savior, so also he did nothing and taught nothing that might show that the riches of the world were to be sought. On the contrary, in order to inflame us with the love of perfect poverty, Christ came as the poorest, born of the poorest mother when he entered the world to assault the enemy's stronghold. When, as a priest, he offered himself as a victim to God the Father, he was suspended naked on the cross. And all of his life was a furnace of poverty...

It is obvious to me that there were different, legitimate ways of interpreting the fact that Christ had a money bag. Sometimes this fact was balanced with reference to Jesus' command that his apostles have no money. Sometimes this fact was interpreted according to the tradition of the church which determined that Christ was not condemning wealth or people who possessed wealth. Sometimes this fact was interpreted with reference to what an earlier, authoritative teacher had said. For example, Bonaventure cites Augustine:

The Lord had a money bag and, keeping safe the offerings given by the faithful, he distributed both to the needs of his people and to others in need. Then the form for handling church money was first established... (ch. VII, n. 37, 216 below).

In brief, prelates could have money bags and be perfect, but friars minor could not have money bags and be perfect.

WHY SHOULD I READ BONAVENTURE'S *APOLOGIA PAUPERUM*?

For those interested in the battles between the seculars and the mendicants in the thirteenth century this is a primary text. For those who want to get to know a different facet of the personality of St. Bonaventure who wrote peaceful biblical commentaries and elevated spiritual tractates this polemical text will satisfy your desires. For members of the Franciscan Family who read Bonaventure's books for inspiration and knowledge of things Franciscan this text will bestow rich rewards, especially as Bonaventure challenges all such readers to take the goal of evangelical perfection with utmost seriousness. Bonaventure will also challenge them to pursue evangelical poverty in imitation of Christ and the Apostles. Bonaventure's style and mode of argumentation may be unfamiliar to us, but attentive and patient reading will provide many gems of inspiration.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND SHORT TITLES

ACW	Ancient Christian Writers
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina
CFS	Cistercian Fathers Series
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latino- rum
CSS	Cistercian Studies Series
CUA	Catholic University of America
<i>Decretum magistri Gratiani</i>	<i>Decretum magistri Gratiani in Corpus iuris canonici</i> , Volume I. Edited by Aemilius Friedberg. 2 nd Edition. Leipzig: B. Tauchnitz, 1879/ Graz: Akademische Druck.- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1955.
Deferrari	Roy J. Deferrari, <i>A Latin-English Dictionary of St. Thomas Aquinas</i> , Boston, MA: Daughters of St. Paul, 1960, 1986.
Douay Version	<i>The Holy Bible Translated from the Latin Vulgate... The Douay Version of the Old Testament; The Confraternity Edition of The New Testament</i> . New York: P.J. Kenedy & Sons, 1950.
FA:ED	<i>Francis of Assisi: Early Documents</i> . Volumes 1-3. Edited by Regis J. Armstrong, J.A. Wayne Hellmann, William J. Short. New York: New City Press, 1999-2001.
FC	Fathers of the Church
GGHG	Gregory the Great's Homilies on the Gospels
Hurst	<i>Gregory the Great: Forty Gospel Homilies</i> . Translated from the Latin by Dom David

- Hurst. CSS 123; Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1990.
- LCL Loeb Classical Library
- NAB New American Bible
- NPNF1/2 Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First or Second Series. Ed. Philip Schaff. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994-95. Reprint of 1888/93 editions.
- Opera Omnia
S. Bonaventurae Opera Omnia. Studio et Cusa PP. Colegii a S. Bonaventure (Ad Claras Aquas). Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1882-1902. There are nine volumes of text and one volume of indices. The volume number is first given and then the page number, e.g., 5:24.
- PG Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Graeca. Ed. J.P. Migne.
- PL Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Latina. Ed. J.P. Migne.
- QuarED The editors who in 1891 produced the text and the notes of Bonaventure's *Apologia Pauperum* in Opera Omnia, VIII.
- SBOp *Sancti Bernardi Opera I-VIII*. Ed. J. Leclercq and H.M. Rochais with the assistance of C. H. Talbot for Volumes I-II. Rome: Editiones Cisterciensis, 1957-77.
- SC Sources Chretienne. Vol. 109. Ed. J.C. Guy. Paris: Cerf, 2001.
- Vulgate *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*. Adiuvantibus B. Fischer, I. Gribomont (†), H.F.D. Sparks, W. Thiele recensuit et brevi apparatus critico instruxit Robertus Weber (†) editionem quartam emendatam cum sociis B. Fischer, H.I. Frede, H.F.D. Sparks, W. Thiele praeparavit Roger Gryson. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1969. 4th ed. 1994.

WAE	<i>The Works of Aristotle</i> . Volumes 1-12. Translated into English under the editorship of W.D. Ross. London: Oxford University Press, 1928.
WSA	Works of Saint Augustine
WSB	Works of St. Bonaventure

Old Testament

Gen	1 Chron	Wis	Obadiah
Ex	2 Chron	Sir	Jonah
Lev	Ezra	Isa	Micah
Num	Nehemiah	Jer	Nah
Deut	Tob	Lam	Hab
Joshua	Judith	Bar	Zeph
Judges	Esther	Ez	Haggai
Ruth	Job	Dan	Zech
1 Sam	Ps	Hosea	Mal
2 Sam	Prov	Joel	1 Macc
1 Kings	Qoh	Amos	2 Macc
2 Kings	Cant		

New Testament

Matt	1 Cor	1 Thes	Hebr	3 John
Mark	2 Cor	2 Thes	James	Jude
Luke	Gal	1 Tim	1 Peter	Rev
John	Eph	2 Tim	2 Peter	
Acts	Phil	Titus	1 John	
Rom	Col	Phlm	2 John	

A WORD ABOUT THIS TRANSLATION

The primary goals in translation have been readability and fidelity. In translations from the Vulgate slavish attention has not been paid to the Douay Version. Rather translations have been adapted to contemporary English usage and to the demands of Bonaventure's exposition. From time to time I will call my readers' attention to Bonaventure's playfulness with words. I have supplemented my translation of Bonaventure's *Apologia pauperum* by providing, in an Appendix, an annotated translation of a sermon by Gerard of Abbeville. This translation will give readers yet another entry into the thought of Gerard of Abbeville. Finally, I generally translate *pauper* by "poor" and *mendicantes pauperes* by "mendicant poor."

A WORD ABOUT THE INDICES

Through the thorough indices readers have access to many treasures. The scripture index indicates Bonaventure's profound appreciation of God's wisdom and points to his methodology of interpreting the Old and New Testaments. The index to Ecclesiastical Authors will track Bonaventure's many references to Augustine, John Chrysostom, and Jerome and to the various Glossae and manifest his dependence upon tradition. Because of his polemic against Gerard of Abbeville, who was dependent upon William of Saint-Amour, a canonist, Bonaventure quoted extensively from canon law. These references will be found under Gratian in this index. The final index refers to Philosophers and Jurists and indicates that Bonaventure at times builds upon the insights of philosophers and those knowledgeable in legal matters.

PROLOGUE

1. It is certain that it has been established by an inviolable decree of the Supreme Legislator that worship must be rendered to the eternal Majesty in such a way as to avoid idolatry. Further, that the created intellect must be subservient to the Supreme Truth in such a way as to prevent any assent to falsehood. Moreover, that human beings be taken up with the sanctification of their spirits in such a way as to be liberated from servitude to carnal pleasures. Finally, that human beings must embrace the righteousness of God-conforming virtues in such a way as to shun the depravity of deforming vice. Thus, just as we are commanded by a special love to desire and seek after the truth of faith and morals, so too are we constrained by an immense horror to avoid errors opposed to them. Our revulsion should be the stronger as these errors prove to be more pernicious. Catholic commentators of Sacred Scripture have known about this and, as soon as they have detected that the seeds of perverse teaching are growing, have striven to their utmost to eradicate these seedlings, lest they grow and choke the seed that the Lord has sown.

2. But in these last days¹ though the splendor of evangelical truth has shone more brilliantly than ever, we have

¹ See 2 Tim 3:1: “But know this, that in the last days dangerous times will come.” See *Disputed Questions on Evangelical Perfection*, introduction and notes by Robert J. Karris, translation by Thomas Reist and Robert J. Karris, WSB XIII (Saint Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2008), 7-22 for the eschatological dimensions of the phrase “in the last days” for Bonaventure and for the calumniator of the friars.

witnessed a thing of which we cannot speak without shedding copious tears. There has been spread abroad, even through the written word, a doctrine that like a loathsome and horrible exhalation from the bottomless pit² would block the resplendent rays of the very Sun of Justice and darken the sky of Christian minds.³ Such a pernicious blot must not be allowed to spread, insulting God and endangering souls all the more as the serpent's cunning lends it a superficial air of piety. The clothing this teaching is wearing must be revealed.⁴ The trap must be clearly exposed. Thus foresight may prevent disaster. And we trust that the author of these great errors who is still alive may yet by the clemency of God be set aright. Christ must be earnestly petitioned for him so that, remembering his mercy, he may, by the power of his voice and the light of his wisdom, which he once showed to Saul, strike the haughty one with terror, cast the proud one down, pursue the erring one, and correct him by leading him back to truth.⁵

And since "better are the wounds of a friend than the deceitful kisses of an enemy,"⁶ the feeble head of such a person should not be fattened with "the oil of the sinner,"⁷ that is, flattery. Nor should this oil be applied to heal the ulcer of his swollen heart. Rather the impudent stiff-neck⁸ of one so insolent should be struck with severe reproach, not with the hatred of a bitter heart, but with the imitable love of a calm

² See Rev 9:2: "And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke came up out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. And the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit."

³ See Mal 4:2: "But unto you who fear my name, the Sun of Justice shall arise ..."

⁴ Bonaventure alludes to Job 41:4: "Who has revealed the texture of his (Leviathan's) clothing."

⁵ Bonaventure alludes to the conversion of St. Paul/Saul. See Acts 9:1-9 and Gal 1:11-24.

⁶ This is a verbatim citation of Prov 27:6.

⁷ See Ps 140:5: "The just person will correct me with mercy and will correct me, but let not the oil of the sinner fatten my head."

⁸ Bonaventure seems to be alluding to a common biblical complaint: This people is stiff-necked. See, e.g., Ex 33:3: "I will not go up before you, for you are a stiff-necked people ..."

mind. As for the pestiferous teaching itself, it must be refuted in an orderly manner, so that in the manner of an apology for the truth the response may be adequate to the objection and the defense may correspond to the attack of the adversary.

3. So since the opponent's attack is aimed first at toppling the pinnacle of evangelical perfection, second at demolishing its defenses, third at subverting its very foundation, fourth at defaming with false accusations the sincerity of those who are poor for Christ in order to make them seem loathsome to the world, a fourfold reply must be constructed as four lines of defense against this fourfold assault. Each line of defense must have three sides, as the subject matter demands, so that the soldiers of the Gospel, surrounded by these triangular fortifications and protected on all sides by the shield of the truth, may remain invulnerable against the sharp points of the flashing darts.⁹

Chapter I:

The first point of the first answer, in which the perverse intention of the calumniator is exposed and the lofty perfection of Christ's true condescension is explained.

Chapter II:

The second point of the first answer and chapter two, in which the fundamental error concerning the meaning of perfection and imperfection is shattered and the exemplarity of true perfection and its difference from imperfection are made clear.

Chapter III:

The third point of the first answer and chapter three, in which the integrity of evangelical perfection is revealed and its sublime state and many levels displayed.

⁹ Cf. Eph 6:16: "In all things taking up the shield of faith, with which you may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the most wicked one."

Chapter IV:

The first point of the second answer and the fourth chapter, in which the desire for martyrdom is shown to be perfect in itself, and the flight from martyrdom is shown to be imperfect by itself.

Chapter V:

The second point of the second answer and chapter five, in which the perfection and praiseworthiness of abstinence are declared and calumnious attacks against it are disproved.¹⁰

Chapter VI:

The third part of the second answer and chapter six, in which the severity of fasting is defended as consonant with perfection and is recommended in a manifold way.¹¹

Chapter VII:

The first point of the third answer and the seventh chapter, in which voluntary and penurious poverty is shown to be the foundation of evangelical perfection and possible objections are answered.

Chapter VIII:

Second point of the third answer and the eighth chapter, in which levitical and ecclesiastical ownership of wealth is shown not to be contrary to the perfection of poverty, while commendation of wealth is proven to be insecure.

Chapter IX:

Third point of the third answer and the ninth chapter in which a false reason for renunciation is eliminated, and the twelve prerogatives of penurious poverty are shown.

¹⁰ See *Contra adversarium*, 31-45 which has the title: "The beginning of part three of the first book: that eating meat and drinking wine, according to what the Lord did, in no way detracts from Christian perfection."

¹¹ See *Contra adversarium*, 45-56: "The beginning of the fourth part of book one: that not to fast, following the example of Christ, is fitting for perfect wayfarers."

Chapter X:

First point of the fourth answer and the tenth chapter, in which the religious life of those who have no money bag is defended against error and the true right of ecclesiastical possessions is explained.

Chapter XI:

Second point of the fourth answer and chapter eleven, in which the profession of the friars minor is shown to be truly without appropriation of immobile or mobile goods, and without ownership of money, either in private or in common.

Chapter XII:

Third point of the fourth answer and chapter twelve, in which the evangelizing poor are shown to produce many fruits, and their state is defended against several malicious comments.

CHAPTER I

The First Chapter: The first point of the first answer, in which the perverse intention of the calumniator is exposed and the lofty perfection of Christ's true condescension is explained.

1. The person who wants to read in a careful manner that calumnious tractate that begins with the words, "Certain people have become so presumptuous,"¹ can easily notice that it was written with an uninformed zeal and that it does not contain sound doctrine. First, it was published in defense of that error-laden book that begins, "Behold, those that see will cry without,"² and that was recently condemned by the Apostolic See. This act of publishing in itself smacks of

¹ See *Tractatus Gerardi de Abbatisvilla, "Contra adversarium perfectionis christianiae,"* ed. Sophronius Clasen (Florence Ad Claras Aquas: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1939), 11. The citation is verbatim. The full title of this work is *Contra adversarium perfectionis christianae, maxime praelatorum facultatumque ecclesiasticarum inimicum*. On page 8 Clasen states that the main source for Gerald of Abbeville's treatise is William of Saint-Amour's *Collectiones sacrae et canonicae Scripturae ad defensionem ecclesiasticae Hierarchiae et praeparationem simplicium fidelium Christi contra pericula imminientia Ecclesiae generali per hypocritas, pseudo-praedicatoros et penetrantes domos, et otiosos et gyrovagos*.

² The author is William of Saint-Amour who begins his *De periculis novissimorum temporum* with this citation from Isa 33:7. See WSB XIII, 8-14 for more details about William of Saint-Amour's writings and how the Apostolic See responded to them. See also *William of Saint-Amour De periculis novissimorum temporum*, edition, translation, and introduction by G. Geltner, Dallas Medieval Texts and Translations 8 (Paris/Leuven/Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2008).

rebellion, for it spurns the Lawgiver's command sanctioned in Deuteronomy 17:8-12:

If you perceive that there is among you a hard and doubtful matter in judgment ... you shall go to the priests of the Levitical race ... you shall follow their decision. Neither shall you turn to the right nor to the left. But the person who is proud and refuses to obey the commandment of the priest, who is ministering at that time to the Lord, your God, and the decree of the judge, shall die ...

Thus, if at the time of the figurative priesthood, to oppose the judgment of the pontiff was a crime punishable by death, how much more intolerable it is at the time of fully revealed truth and in full knowledge of the plenary power conferred upon the Vicar of Christ to contradict his judgment in matters of faith and morals, approving what he reproveth, restoring what he destroys, and defending what he condemns.

2. Moreover, if a person carefully examines the entire content of this book and does so with the eyes of faith, he would find that it is not disseminating sound teaching, but unsound and impious teaching. Thus, in the first book the author sings the praises of flight from persecution and death as the most characteristic acts of perfect and holy men, but he states that abstinence and fasting, as medicines against spiritual illnesses, are especially characteristic of the imperfect. In his second book he strives to show that the state of those who possess wealth is most worthy of all praise. He also tries to establish that the state of those who have nothing is dangerous and imperfect. In his third book he devises as many cunning and specious arguments as he can to attack the poverty and humility of the mendicant religious. From what has been said it is patently clear that pernicious teaching of this kind is not only in open conflict with the throne of the Apostles,

but also with the throne of God and of the Lamb.³ For the Holy Gospel calls the poor blessed.⁴ It also calls blessed those who mourn,⁵ who hunger,⁶ and who suffer persecution with⁷ joy and longing. In all of this the Gospel spurs them along the narrow path that leads to life.⁸ On the contrary, this man proclaims those perfect and blessed who flee persecution, avoid fasting, accumulate goods, and extolled with the highest honors. Now every Christian knows that such teaching is foreign to the Savior's teaching, for Christ himself, the teacher of all, is always inviting his disciples not to the consolations of the flesh, but to the sufferings of the cross.⁹

3. Finally, the perverse and bitter fanaticism of the author of this book appears in its title, development, and conclusion. For he is writing against a person who authored a tractate against the condemned book.¹⁰ The first words of this treatise are "the hand that is raised up against the Almighty."¹¹ Both in purpose and content this treatise defends, supports, and praises the perfection of extreme poverty. In contrast this man prefaces his work with a title that indicates that it is directed "Against the adversary of Christian perfection and especially against the enemy of prelates and of ecclesi-

³ Cf. Rev 22:3: "And there shall be no more any accursed thing, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it (the heavenly Jerusalem), and his servants shall serve him."

⁴ See Matt 5:3 and Luke 6:20.

⁵ See Matt 5:5 and Luke 6:21.

⁶ See Luke 6:21. Cf. Matt 5:6: "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied."

⁷ See Matt 5:10. Cf. Luke 6:22.

⁸ See Matt 7:14: "How narrow the gate and confining the way that leads to life. And those who find it are few."

⁹ See e.g., Matt 10:38; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23.

¹⁰ The condemned book is William of Saint-Amour's *De periculis novissimorum temporum*.

¹¹ Thomas of York wrote this treatise, *Manus que contra Omnipotentem tenditur*, whose text may be found in Max Bierbaum, *Bettelorden und Weltgeistlichkeit an der Universität Paris: Texte und Untersuchungen zum literarischen Armuts- und Exemptionsstreit des 13. Jahrhunderts (1255-1272)*, Franziskanische Studien 2 (Münster in Westf.: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1920), 37-168.

astical possessions,” as if the height of poverty could not be praised except at the cost of insulting Christ and the dignity of the Church. In this he shows himself either wicked or ignorant, for either he is deliberately imputing to the innocent an imaginary crime or he fails to understand that each of the different states of the Church is worthy of its own proper and lofty praise, different in every case, although in no way contradictory of the others. Thus, the praise of virginity should not be taken as a disparagement of the married state nor should the praise of solitary life be taken as a condemnation of cenobitic life. Certainly Holy Mother Church, who reverently sings the praises of every confessor with “there was not found the like of him ... who kept the law of the Most High,”¹² does not thereby demean the glorious choir of the Apostles nor the white-robed army of the martyrs. Each state has its own prerogatives for which it may be especially praised without injustice to the others. Moreover, if the praise of the children does not decrease, but rather increases the praise of the parents, any commendation of the spiritual poor should be seen, not as a debasing of prelates, but rather as their exaltation and glorification.

4. It clearly follows from this that the work under consideration is based upon a false charge through which the enemy of the poor tries to instill dissent between the parents and their children, the tutors with the orphans, the providers with their wards, in order that, having deprived them of their patrons’ protection, he may devour the destitute, rob the poor, and murder the innocent.¹³ In the very introduction of his book he accuses the poor, among whom his adversary was numbered, of being presumptuous, egoistic, self-complacent, pretentious, and arrogant to an unheard of degree, im-

¹² See Sir 44:20: “Abraham was the great father of a multitude of nations, and there was not found the like of him in glory, who kept the law of the Most High and was in covenant with him.”

¹³ Cf. Ps 9B:8-9: “He sits in ambush with the rich in private places that he may kill the innocent. His eyes are upon the poor person.... He lies in ambush, so that he may catch the poor person, to catch the poor person while he draws him to himself.”