

SIN.

COVETOUSNESS. - LUST. - GLUTTONY.

Covetousness.

- 1.** Covetousness is an inordinate love of earthly goods, especially money.
- 2.** It is not that we are absolutely forbidden to love the goods of this world; what is forbidden is an excessive love of them and for their own sake. We can always desire them in connection with God, considering and using them as a means to our salvation.
- 3.** Love of them becomes excessive when we do not mind offending God in order to acquire, preserve or increase them.
- 4.** Covetousness is a grievous sin. St. Paul calls it an *idolatry*. « No covetous person (which is a serving of idols) hath inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God » (*Eph.*_v, 5.)
- 5.** The poor are not immune against this sin, for to covet is not only to love inordinately what we possess, but also to have an inordinate longing for what we do not possess.
- 6.** Covetousness hardens our hearts against the poor, makes us indifferent towards heavenly things and sometimes even leads us into acquiring wrongfully what belongs to our neighbour.
- 7.** The contrary virtue to covetousness is *liberality*.
- 8.** The best safeguards against covetousness are (1) to remember that Our Lord was poor and had not where to lay his head, (2) to think of death which must soon dispossess us of all we have, and (3) to give to the poor according to our means.

Lust.

9. Lust is the shameful sin of impurity, which we have seen, is forbidden by the sixth and ninth Commandments.

10. The effect of lust is to create in us a disgust for our religious duties, to blind the intellect, harden the heart, undermine the body and destroy the best qualities of the soul, and often to bring us to an impenitent end.

11. The contrary virtue to lust is *chastity*.

Gluttony

12. Gluttony is an inordinate love of eating and drinking.

13. Love of eating and drinking becomes inordinate when it makes us eat and drink to excess and for the sole pleasure of gratifying our sensuality.

14. In taking our meals our object ought to be the preservation of our lives for the service of God and the performance of our duties.

15. Gluttony is a grievous sin. St. Paul likens gluttons to idolaters « whose god is their belly ». (*Phil.* III, 19.)

16. The worst form of gluttony is drunkenness, which consists in imbibing spirituous liquors until the reason is lost.

17. Among the effects of gluttony are breaches of the law of fasting and abstinence, brutalisation of self, indiscretion in speech, quarrelling, brawling and the sin of impurity.

18. Furthermore drunkenness destroys one's constitution, reputation and fortune, and often leads to a premature and horrible death.

19. The contrary virtue to the vice of gluttony is *temperance*.

20. The best ways to guard against the vice is (1) to say grace before and after meals, (2) to do every day some little act of mortification in regard to food and drink, (3) to avoid public houses and other places where intoxicating beverages are sold and (4) to shun the company of intemperate persons.

Explanation of the Plate.

21. It was covetousness that drove Judas into betraying His Master into the hands of His enemies for thirty pieces of silver. *In the top picture* we see the traitor apostle standing, empty purse in hand, before the chief priest and magistrates who are plotting together how to get Jesus into their power so as to compass His death. He is in the act of bargaining with the president of the assembly over the price to be paid to him for his treason. (*Luke* XXII, 2-5.)

22. It was through gluttony that Esau sold his right of the first-born to his brother Jacob (*see bottom picture*). Jacob had just prepared some lentil pottage when Esau, coming in from the chase tired and hungry, and too greedy to wait until he could cook something for himself, readily bartered for it his birthright, to which were attached the magnificent promises given to Abraham by the Almighty. (*Gen.* XXV, 29-34.)

23. *The middle picture* illustrates the parable of the prodigal son, who was reduced to tending pigs owing to dire poverty to which a life of pleasure and debauch had brought him. (*Luke* XV.)

24. *The inset picture at the top* shows Jesus seated at table with his disciples in the house of Simon the leper at Bethany. Note the empty place of the absent Judas. (*Mark* XIV, 3, 10.)
