



# The Holy See

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APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTION

**PAENITEMINI**

OF THE SUPREME PONTIFF

PAUL VI

**ON FAST AND ABSTINENCE** *"Be converted and believe in the Gospel"*(1) It seems to us that we must repeat these words of the Lord today at a moment when—with the closing of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council—the Church continues along its path with more vigorous steps. Among the grave and urgent problems which in fact summon our pastoral concern, it seems to us that not the least is to remind our sons—and all religious men of our times—of the significance and importance of the divine precept of penitence. We are prompted to this by the fuller and more profound vision of the Church and its relationship with the world given us recently by the supreme ecumenical assembly. During the council, in fact, the Church, in an effort to arrive at a more profound meditation on the mystery of itself, examined its own nature in all its dimensions and scrutinized its human and divine, visible and invisible, temporal and eternal elements. By first of all examining more thoroughly the link which binds it to Christ and His salvific action, it has underlined more clearly how all its members are called upon to participate in the work of Christ and therefore to participate also in His expiation.(2) In addition, it has gained a clearer awareness that, while it is by divine vocation holy and without blemish,(3) it is defective in its members and in continuous need of conversion and renewal,(4) a renewal which must be implemented not only interiorly and individually but also externally and socially.(5) Lastly, the Church has considered more attentively its role in the earthly city,(6) that is to say, its mission of showing man the right way to use earthly goods and to collaborate in the "consecration of the world." But at the same time it has considered more attentively its task of prompting its sons to that salutary abstinence which will forearm them against the danger of allowing themselves to be delayed by the things of this world in their pilgrimage toward their home in heaven.(7) For these reasons we should like today to repeat to our sons the words spoken by Peter in his first speech after Pentecost: "Repent...then for the forgiveness of your sins."(8) And at the same time we want to repeat once more to all the nations of the earth the invitation of Paul to the Gentiles of Lystra: "Turn...to the living God."(9) **CHAPTER I** The Church—which during the council examined with greater attention its relations not only with the separated brethren but also with non-Christian religions—has noted with joy that almost everywhere and at all times penitence has held a place of great importance, since it is closely linked with the intimate sense of religion which pervades the life of most ancient peoples as well as with the more advanced expressions of the great religions connected with the progress of culture.(10) In the Old Testament the religious sense of penitence is revealed with even greater richness. Even though man generally has recourse to it in the aftermath of sin to placate the wrath of God,(11) or on the occasion of grave calamities,(12) or when special dangers are imminent,(13) or in any case to obtain benefits from the Lord,(14) we can nevertheless establish that external penitential practices are accompanied by an inner attitude of "conversion," that is to say of condemnation of and

detachment from sin and of striving toward God.(15) One goes without food or gives away his property (fasting is generally accompanied not only by prayer but also by alms (16)) even after sins have been forgiven and independently of a request for graces. One fasts or applies physical discipline to "chastise one's own soul,"(17) to "humble oneself in the sight of his own God,"(18) to "turn one's face toward Jehovah,"(19) to "dispose oneself to prayer,"(20) to "understand" more intimately the things which are divine,(21) or to prepare oneself for the encounter with God.(22)Penance therefore—already in the Old Testament—is a religious, personal act which has as its aim love and surrender to God: fasting for the sake of God, not for one's own self.(23) Such it must remain also in the various penitential rites sanctioned by law. When this is not verified, the Lord is displeased with His people: "Today you have not fasted in a way which will make your voice heard on high.... Rend your heart and not your garments, and return to the Lord your God."(24)The social aspect of penitence is not lacking in the Old Testament. In fact, the penitential liturgies of the Old Covenant are not only a collective awareness of sin but constitute in reality a condition for belonging to the people of God.(25)We can further establish that penitence was represented even before Christ as a means and a sign of perfection and sanctity. Judith,(26) Daniel,(27) the prophetess Anna and many other elect souls served God day and night with fasting and prayers,(28) and with joy and cheerfulness.(29)Finally, we find among the just ones of the Old Testament those who offered themselves to satisfy with their own personal penitence for the sins of the community. This is what Moses did in the 40 days when he fasted to placate the Lord for the guilt of his unfaithful people.(30) This above all is how the character of the Servant of Jehovah is presented, "who took on our infirmities" and in whom "the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."(31)All this, however, was but a foreshadowing of things to come.(32) Penitence—required by the inner life, confirmed by the religious experience of mankind and the object of particular precept of divine revelation—assumes "in Christ and the Church" new dimensions infinitely broader and more profound.Christ, who always practiced in His life what He preached, before beginning His ministry spent 40 days and 40 nights in prayer and fasting, and began His public mission with the joyful message: "The kingdom of God is at hand." To this He added the command: "Repent and believe in the Gospel."(33) These words constitute, in a way, a compendium of the whole Christian life.The kingdom of God announced by Christ can be entered only by a "change of heart" ("metanoia") that is to say through that intimate and total change and renewal of the entire man—of all his opinions, judgments and decisions—which takes place in him in the light of the sanctity and charity of God, the sanctity and charity which were manifested to us in the Son and communicated fully.(34)The invitation of the Son to "metanoia" becomes all the more inescapable inasmuch as He not only preaches it but Himself offers an example. Christ, in fact, is the supreme model for those doing penance. He willed to suffer punishment for sins which were not His but those of others.(35)In the presence of Christ man is illumined with a new light and consequently recognizes the holiness of God and the gravity of sin.(36) Through the word of Christ a message is transmitted to him which invites him to conversion and grants forgiveness of sins. These gifts he fully attains in baptism. This sacrament, in fact, configures him to the passion, death and resurrection of the Lord,(37) and places the whole future of the life of the baptized under the seal of this mystery.Therefore, following the Master, every Christian must renounce himself, take up his own cross and participate in the sufferings of Christ. Thus transformed into the image of Christ's death, he is made capable of meditating on the glory of the resurrection.(38) Furthermore, following the Master, he can no longer live for himself,(39) but must live for Him who loves him and gave Himself for him.(40) He will also have to live for his brethren, completing "in his flesh that which is lacking in the sufferings of Christ...for in the benefit of his body, which is the church."(41)In addition, since the Church is closely linked to Christ, the penitence of the individual Christian also has an intimate relationship of its own with the whole ecclesial community. In fact, not only does he receive in the bosom of the Church through baptism the fundamental gift of "metanoia," but this gift is restored and reinvigorated in those members of the Body of Christ who have fallen into sin through the sacrament of penance. "Those

who approach the sacrament of penance receive from the mercy of God forgiveness for offenses committed against Him and at the same time become reconciled with the Church on which they have inflicted a wound by sinning, and the Church cooperates in their conversion with charity, example and prayer."(42) And in the Church, finally, the little acts of penitence imposed each time in the sacrament become a form of participation in a special way in the infinite expiation of Christ to join to the sacramental satisfaction itself every other action he performs, his every suffering and sorrow.(43) Thus the task of bearing in his body and soul the death of the Lord(44) affects the whole life of the baptized person at every instant and in every aspect. **CHAPTER II**The preeminently interior and religious character of penitence and the new wondrous aspects which it assumes "in Christ and in the Church" neither excludes nor lessens in any way the external practice of this virtue, but on the contrary reaffirms its necessity with particular urgency(45) and prompts the Church—always attentive to the signs of the times—to seek, beyond fast and abstinence, new expressions more suitable for the realization, according to the character of various epochs, of the precise goal of penitence. True penitence, however, cannot ever prescind from physical asceticism as well. Our whole being in fact, body and soul, (indeed the whole of nature, even animals without reason, as Holy Scripture often points out)(46) must participate actively in this religious act whereby the creature recognizes divine holiness and majesty. The necessity of the mortification of the flesh also stands clearly revealed if we consider the fragility of our nature, in which, since Adam's sin, flesh and spirit have contrasting desires.(47) This exercise of bodily mortification—far removed from any form of stoicism does not imply a condemnation of the flesh which sons of God deign to assume.(48) On the contrary, mortification aims at the "liberation"(49) of man, who often finds himself, because of concupiscence, almost chained(50) by his own senses. Through "corporal fasting"(51) man regains strength and the "wound inflicted on the dignity of our nature by intemperance is cured by the medicine of a salutary abstinence."(52) Nevertheless, in the New Testament and in the history of the Church—although the duty of doing penance is motivated above all by participation in the sufferings of Christ—the necessity of an asceticism which chastises the body and brings it into subjection is affirmed with special insistence by the example of Christ Himself.(53) Against the real and ever recurring danger of formalism and pharisaism the Divine Master in the New Covenant openly condemned—and so have the Apostles, Fathers and supreme pontiffs—any form of penitence which is purely external. The intimate relationship which exists in penitence between the external act, inner conversion, prayer and works of charity is affirmed and widely developed in the liturgical texts and authors of every era.(54) **CHAPTER III** Therefore the Church—while it reaffirms the primacy of the religious and supernatural values of penitence (values extremely suitable for restoring to the world today a sense of the presence of God and of His sovereignty over man and a sense of Christ and His salvation)(55)—invites everyone to accompany the inner conversion of the spirit with the voluntary exercise of external acts of penitence: A — It insists first of all that the virtue of penitence be exercised in persevering faithfulness to the duties of one's state in life, in the acceptance of the difficulties arising from one's work and from human coexistence, in a patient bearing of the trials of earthly life and of the utter insecurity which pervades it.(56) B — Those members of the Church who are stricken by infirmities, illnesses, poverty or misfortunes, or who are persecuted for the love of justice, are invited to unite their sorrows to the suffering of Christ in such a way that they not only satisfy more thoroughly the precept of penitence but also obtain for the brethren a life of grace and for themselves that beatitude which is promised in the Gospel to those who suffer.(57) C — The precept of penitence must be satisfied in a more perfect way by priests, who are more closely linked to Christ through sacred character, as well as by those who in order to follow more closely the abnegation of the Lord and to find an easier and more efficacious path to the perfection of charity practice the evangelical counsels.(58) The Church, however, invites all Christians without distinction to respond to the divine precept of penitence by some voluntary act, apart from the renunciation imposed by the burdens of everyday life.(59) To recall and urge all the faithful to the observance of the divine

precept of penitence, the Apostolic See intends to reorganize penitential discipline with practices more suited to our times. It is up to the bishops—gathered in their episcopal conferences—to establish the norms which, in their pastoral solicitude and prudence, and with the direct knowledge they have of local conditions, they consider the most opportune and efficacious. The following, however is established: In the first place, Holy Mother Church, although it has always observed in a special way abstinence from meat and fasting, nevertheless wants to indicate in the traditional triad of "prayer—fasting—charity" the fundamental means of complying with the divine precepts of penitence. These means were the same throughout the centuries, but in our time there are special reasons whereby, according to the demands of various localities, it is necessary to inculcate some special form of penitence in preference to others.(60) Therefore, where economic well-being is greater, so much more will the witness of asceticism have to be given in order that the sons of the Church may not be involved in the spirit of the "world,"(61) and at the same time the witness of charity will have to be given to the brethren who suffer poverty and hunger beyond any barrier of nation or continent.(62) On the other hand, in countries where the standard of living is lower, it will be more pleasing to God the Father and more useful to the members of the Body of Christ if Christians—while they seek in every way to promote better social justice—offer their suffering in prayer to the Lord in close union with the Cross of Christ. Therefore, the Church, while preserving—where it can be more readily observed—the custom (observed for many centuries with canonical norms) of practicing penitence also through abstinence from meat and fasting, intends to ratify with its prescriptions other forms of penitence as well, provided that it seems opportune to episcopal conferences to replace the observance of fast and abstinence with exercises of prayer and works of charity. In order that all the faithful, however, may be united in a common celebration of penitence, the Apostolic See intends to establish certain penitential days and seasons(63) chosen among those which in the course of the liturgical year are closer to the paschal mystery of Christ(64) or might be required by the special needs of the ecclesial community.(65) Therefore, the following is declared and established: I. 1. By divine law all the faithful are required to do penance. 2. The prescriptions of ecclesiastical law regarding penitence are totally reorganized according to the following norms: II. 1. The time of Lent preserves its penitential character. The days of penitence to be observed under obligation throughout the Church are all Fridays and Ash Wednesday, that is to say the first days of "Grande Quaresima" (Great Lent), according to the diversity of the rites. Their substantial observance binds gravely. 2. Apart from the faculties referred to in VI and VIII regarding the manner of fulfilling the precept of penitence on such days, abstinence is to be observed on every Friday which does not fall on a day of obligation, while abstinence and fast is to be observed on Ash Wednesday or, according to the various practices of the rites, on the first day of "Grande Quaresima" (Great Lent) and on Good Friday. III. 1. The law of abstinence forbids the use of meat, but not of eggs, the products of milk or condiments made of animal fat. 2. The law of fasting allows only one full meal a day, but does not prohibit taking some food in the morning and evening, observing—as far as quantity and quality are concerned—approved local custom. IV. To the law of abstinence those are bound who have completed their 14th year of age. To the law of fast those of the faithful are bound who have completed their 21st year and up until the beginning of their 60th year. As regards those of a lesser age, pastors of souls and parents should see to it with particular care that they are educated to a true sense of penitence. V. All privileges and indulgences, whether general or particular, are abrogated with these norms, but nothing is changed either regarding the vows of any physical or moral person or regarding the constitutions and rules of any approved religious congregation or institute. VI. 1. In accordance with the conciliar decree *Christus Dominus* regarding the pastoral office of bishops, number 38,4, it is the task of episcopal conferences to: A. Transfer for just cause the days of penitence, always taking into account the Lenten season; B. Substitute abstinence and fast wholly or in part with other forms of penitence and especially works of charity and the exercises of piety. 2. By way of information, episcopal conferences should communicate to the Apostolic See what they have decided on the matter. VII.

While the faculties of individual bishops of dispensing, according to the decree *Christus Dominus*, number 8b, remain unchanged, pastors also for just cause and in accordance with the prescriptions of the Ordinary may grant to individual faithful as well as individual families dispensation or commutation of abstinence and fast into other pious practices. The superior of a religious house or clerical institute enjoys the same faculties for his subjects. VIII. In the Eastern rites it is the right of the patriarch, together with the synod or supreme authority of every rite, together with the council of hierarchs, to determine the days of fast and abstinence in accordance with the conciliar decree on the Eastern rites, number 23. IX. 1. It is strongly desired that bishops and all pastors of souls, in addition to the more frequent use of the sacrament of penance, promote with zeal, particularly during the Lenten season, extraordinary practices of penitence aimed at expiation and impetration. 2. It is strongly recommended to all the faithful that they keep deeply rooted in their hearts a genuine Christian spirit of penitence to spur them to accomplish works of charity and penitence. X. 1. These prescriptions which, by way of exception, are promulgated by means of *L'Osservatore Romano*, become effective on Ash Wednesday of this year, that is to say on the 23rd of the present month. 2. Where particular privileges and indulgences have been in force until now—whether general or particular of any kind—"vacatio legis" [suspension of the law] for six months from the day of promulgation is to be regarded as granted. We desire that these norms and prescriptions for the present and future be established and effective notwithstanding—inasmuch as is necessary—apostolic constitutions and regulations issued by our predecessors and all other prescriptions, even if worthy of particular mention and revocation. *Given at Rome, at St.*

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*Peter's, February 17, 1966, the third year of our pontificate.* PAUL VI

## NOTES

1. Mark 1:15.

2. Cf. Dogmatic Constitution on the Nature of the Church (Second Vatican Council), no. 2, and no. 8; and Decree on the Lay Apostolate, no. 1.

3. Cf. Eph. 5:27.

4. Cf. Constitution on the Nature of the Church, no. 8; and Decree on Ecumenism, nos. 4, 7 and 8.

5. Cf. Constitution on the Liturgy, no. 110.

6. Cf. Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, throughout, but especially no. 40.

7. Cf. 1 Cor. 7:31; Rom. 12:2; Decree on Ecumenism, no. 6; Constitution on the Nature of the Church, nos. 8 and 9; Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, nos. 37, 39 and 93.

8. Acts 2:38.

9. Acts 14:14; Cf. Pope Paul VI's speech to United Nations of Oct. 4, 1965: A.A.S. 57 (1965), p. 885.

10. Cf. Declaration on Church's Relations with Non-Christian Religions, nos. 2 and 3.
11. Cf. 1 Sam. 7:6; 1 Kings 21:20-21, 27; Jer. 3:3, 7, 9; John 1:2; 3:4-5.
12. Cf. 1 Sam. 31:13; 2 Sam. 1:12; 3:35; Baruch 1:2, 5; Judith 20:25-26.
13. Cf. Judith 4:8, 12; 8:10-16; Esther 3:15; 4:1, 16; Psalms 34:13; 2 Chron. 20:3.
14. Cf. 1 Sam. 14:24; 2 Sam. 12:16, 22; Esd. 8:21.
15. In reference cited above, need for interior penitence is clearly illustrated: Cf. 1 Sam. 7:3; Jer. 36:6-7; Baruch 1:17-18; Judith 8:16-17; John 3:8; Zach. 8:9, 21.
16. Cf. Is. 58:6-7; Tob. 12:8-9.
17. Cf. Levit. 16:31.
18. Cf. Dan. 10:12; Esd. 8:21.
19. Cf. Dan. 9:3.
20. Cf. *ibid.*
21. Cf. Dan. 10:12.
22. Cf. Exodus 34:28.
23. Cf. Zach. 7:5.
24. Is. 58:4; Joel 2:13. cf. Is. 58:3-7 throughout; cf. Amos 5 throughout; Is. 1:13-20; Jer. 14:12; Joel 2:12-18; Zach. 1:4-14; Tobias 12:8; Psalms 50:18-19; etc.
25. Cf. Lev. 23:29.
26. Cf. Judith 8:6.
27. Cf. Dan. 10:3.
28. Cf. Luke 2:37; Eccles. 31:12, 17-19; 37:32-34.
29. Cf. Dan. 1:12, 15; Judith 8:6, 7; Matt. 6:17.

30. Cf. Deut. 9:9, 18; Exod. 24:18.
31. Cf. Is. 53:4-11.
32. Cf. Heb. 10:1.
33. Mark 1:15.
34. Cf. Heb. 1:2; Col. 1:19 and throughout; Eph. 1:23 and throughout.
35. Cf. St. Thomas, Summa Theol., III, q. XV, a. 1, ad. 5.
36. Cf. Luke 5:8 and 7:36-50.
37. Cf. Rom. 6:3-11; Col. 2:11-15; 5:1-4.
38. Cf. Phil. 3:10-11; Rom. 8:17.
39. Cf. Rom. 6:10; 14:8; 2 Cor. 5:15; Phil 1:21.
40. Gal. 2:20; cf. Constitution on the Nature of the Church, no. 7; also Gal. 4:19; Phil. 3:21; 2 Tim. 2:11; Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:12 etc.; Rom. 8:17.
41. Cf. Col. 1:24; Decree on Church's Missionary Activity, no. 36, Decree on Seminaries, no. 2.
42. Cf. Constitution on the Nature of the Church, no. 11; James 5:14-16; Rom. 8:17; Col. 1:24; 2 Tim. 2:11-12; 1 Peter 4:13; Decree on Priestly Life and Ministry, nos. 5 and 6.
43. Cf. St. Thomas, Quaestiones Quodlib., III, q. XIII, a. 28.
44. Cf. 2 Cor. 4:10.
45. For example: a) with regard to priests, cf. Decree Priestly Ministry and Life, no. 16; b) regarding spouses, cf. Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, no. 49; also cf. same constitution, no. 52; cf. Pius XII, speech to cardinals archbishops, bishops, etc., of Nov. 2, 1950: A.A.S. 17 (1950), pp. 786-788; cf. Justin, Dialogue with Triphon, 141: 2-3 (MG 6: 797-799).
46. Cf. John 3:7-8.
47. Cf. Gal. 5:16-17; Rom. 7:23.
48. Cf. Roman Martyrology for the Vigil of Christmas; 1 Tim. 4:1-5; Phil. 4:8; Origen, Against

Celsus 7:36 (MG 11:1472).

49. Cf. Lenten Liturgy, throughout; and footnote no. 53 of this document, part B.

50. Cf. Rom. 7:23.

51. Cf. Roman Missal, Preface for Lent: "corporali jejunio vitia comprimis, mentem elevas, virtutem largiris...."

52. Cf. *ibid.*, Collect for Thursday after First Sunday of the Passion (Passion Sunday).

53. A) In the New Testament: 1) words and example of Christ: Matt. 17:20 (cf. Mark 9:28); Matt. 5:29-30; 11:21-24; 3:4; 11:7-11; and 4:2; Mark 1:13; Luke 4:12; cf. Matt. 8:18-22; 2) witness and doctrine of St. Paul: 1 Cor. 9:24-27; Gal. 5:16; 2 Cor. 6:5; *ibid.* 11:27; 3) In the Early Church: Acts 13:3; *ibid.* 14:22; etc.

B) Among the Fathers: several references arranged according to order of time: Didache 1:4 (F. X. Funk, *Patres Apostolici*, ed. 2, Tubingen, 1901, 1: 2); Clement of Rome; 1 Cor. 7:4 and 8:5 (Funk 1:108-110); 2 Clement 16:4 (Funk 2:204); *ibid.* 8:1-3 (Funk 1:192- 194); Aristides, *Apologia* 15:9 (Goodspeed, Goettingen, 1914, 21); Hermas, *Pastor*, Sim. 5:1, 3-5 (Funk 1:530); cf. *ibid.* Sim. 7:2-5 (Funk 1:554); Tertullian, *De Paenitentia* 9 (ML 1:1243-1244); Tertullian, *De Jejuniis* 17 (ML 2:978), Origen, *Homelias in Lev*, Hom. 10:2 (MG 12:528); St. Athanasius, *De Virginitate*, 6 (MG 28:257); *ibid.*, 7, 8 (MG 28:260, 261); Basil, *Homelias*, Hom. 2:5 (MG 31:192); Ambrose, *De Virginitate*, 3:2, 5 (ML 16:221); *idem*, *De Elia et Jejuniis* 2:2, 3:4, 8:22 and 10:33 (ML 14:698, 708); Jerome, *Epistola* 22:17 (ML 22:404); *idem*, *Epistola* 130:10 (ML 22: 1115); Augustine, *Sermo* 208:2 (ML 38:1045; *idem*, *Epistola* 211:8 (ML 33:960); Cassian, *Collationes* 21:13, 14, 17 (ML 49:1187); Nilus, *De Octo Spiritibus Malitiae* 1 (MG 79:1145); Diadochus Photicensis, *Capita Centum de Perfectione Spirituali* 47 (MG 65:1182); Leo the Great, *Sermo* 12:4 (ML 54:171); *idem*, *Sermo* 86:1 (ML 54:437-438); Leonine Sacramentary, Preface for Autumn (ML 55:112).

54. A) In the New Testament: Luke 18:12; cf. Matt. 6:16-18 and 15:11; Hebrews 13:9; Romans 14:15-23.

B) Among the Fathers: cf. footnote no. 53, B.

55. Cf. Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, nos. 10 and 41.

56. Constitution on the Nature of the Church, nos. 34, 36 and 41; cf. Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, no. 4.

57. *Ibid.*, no. 41.

58. Cf. Decree on Priestly Ministry and Life, nos. 12, 13, 16 and 17; Constitution on the Nature of



the Church, no. 41; Decree on Missionary Activity of the Church, no. 24; Constitution on the Nature of the Church, no. 42; Decree on Renovation of the Religious Life, nos. 7, 12, 13, 14 and 25; Decree on Seminaries, nos. 2, 8 and 9.

59. Cf. Constitution on the Nature of the Church, no. 42; Constitution on the Liturgy, nos. 9, 12 and 104.

60. Cf. *Ibid.*, no. 110.

61. Cf. Romans 12:2; Mark 2:19; Matt. 9:15; Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, no. 37.

62. Cf. 1 Cor. 16:1; Romans 15:26-28; Gal. 2:10; 2 Cor. 8:9; Acts 24:17; Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, no. 88.

63. Cf. Constitution on the Liturgy, no. 105.

64. Cf. *Ibid.*, no. 107. Regarding the Lenten season as a preparation for celebrating the Paschal Mystery, cf. *ibid.*, no. 109. Concerning the celebration of the Paschal Mystery each week, cf. *ibid.*, no. 102 and 106; Eusebius, *De Solemnitate Paschali*, 12 (MG 24:705); *idem*, *ibid.*, no. 7 (MG 24:701); John Chrysostom, *In Epistola I ad Tim. 5:3* (MG 62:529-530). *Epistola I ad Tim. 5:3* (MG 62:529-530).

65. Cf. *vg.* in Acts 13:1-4 (on fasting of the Antioch Church, when Paul and Barnabas were sent to announce the Gospel to the Gentiles).