

The Virtue of Hidden Beauty

“Even in the most “modest” of religious habits in consecrated life—in which the body is offered as a sacred gift to God in anticipation of the resurrection—the face is allowed to be seen. It is no coincidence that the Greek word for face, *prosopon*, was also the term for person in the early Church. It is from the face that the light and grace of God can shine through. When one focuses too much on revealing one’s body too much, it is then that the light of grace is diminished, if not extinguished altogether, and sin is allowed to gain a foothold. Beauty abused in this way becomes sin and is repulsive in the sight of God.



aged seven, Our Lady entrusted this prophecy, which embodies her theology on the modern fashions: “Certain fashions will be introduced that will offend Our Lord very much.” To re-quote Pope Pius XII, “They would certainly blush if they could guess the impression they make and the feeling they evoke in those who see them.” Because of this, the young particularly are exposed to the extreme danger of losing their innocence, which is by far, the most beautiful adornment of the mind and body.

St. Anthony Mary Claret stated, concerning immodest and worldly fashions, “Now, observe, my daughter, the contrast between the luxurious dress of many women, and raiment and adornments of Jesus... Tell me: what relation do their fine shoes bear to the spike in Jesus’ Feet? The rings on their hands to the nails which perforate His? The fashionable coiffure to the Crown of Thorns? The painted face to That covered with bruises? Shoulders exposed by the low-cut gown to His, all striped with Blood? Ah, but there is a marked likeness between these worldly women and the Jews who, incited by the Devil, scourged Our Lord! At the hour of such a woman’s death, I think Jesus will be heard saying : ‘Cujus est imago haec... of whom is she the image?’ And the reply will be: ‘Demonii. . . Of the Devil!’ Then He will say: ‘Let her who has followed the Devil’s fashions be handed over to him; and to God, those who have imitated the modesty of Jesus and Mary.’

“Our Blessed Mother knew in advance the moral havoc that would follow the introduction of unholy fashions. This is why she came personally at Fatima in 1917 to forewarn us. At the same time she gave answer to little Jacinta,

Why do they not blush? God gives to each boy and girl a special innate sense of modesty which causes him or her to blush when appearing in public in immodest attire. This instinct is intended by God for the protection of their own chastity. If one no longer blushes one has lost this precious "sense of modesty". As it says in the Bible, 1 Peter 3:4 “but the hidden man of the heart in the incorruptibility of a quiet and a meek spirit, which is rich in the sight of God.” So it should be clear that to be reserved and modest is to be full of the beauty of God, which is beauty itself, for God is all beauty in that which he created and He did create each one of us.

We should always see modesty not as an imposition, but rather as an act of love, of that divine agape which wills the good of the other, so that the beauty and vulnerability of these earthen vessels might be revealed at the right time and in the right way. Just as at the end of time, in that resurrection of all flesh, we will put off the “veil” of the mortal flesh, of our corporeal bodies and possess that mysterious body of the resurrection spoken of by Saint Paul, when our true and ultimate nature will be revealed.”

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