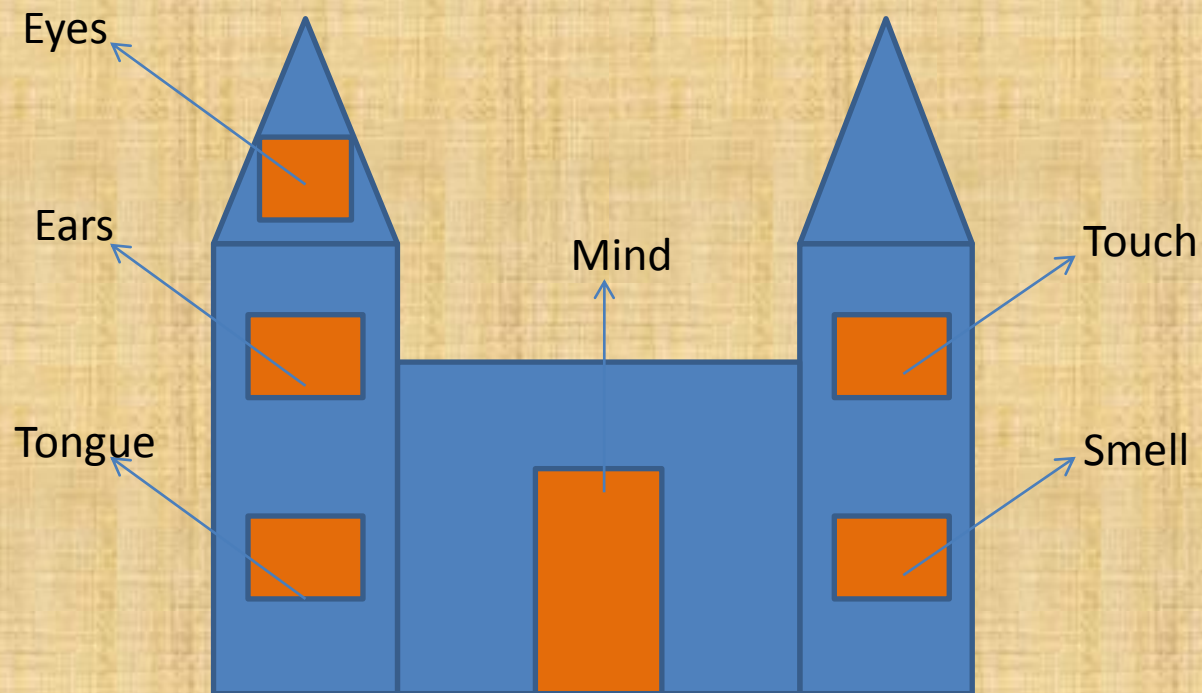


# Purity of the Senses

“Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they shall see God” (*Matthew. 5:8*).

- Saint Theophan the recluse likens man to a king (the soul) who lives in a castle (the body). The castle has 5 windows and a door. The 5 windows are the 5 senses. The door is the mind. The enemy, can not enter into the castle except through the windows or the door. If these are closed shut, the enemy can not enter into the castle.
- Through these windows, the salesman of sin can bring in samples of different experiences or sensations that brings delights to the soul. Out of these, the soul bundles together a circle of comfort and pleasure (fun). The soul comes to consider this circle of pleasures as its primary good and goal. In this way, the order of things become inverted, and instead of seeking God and His Kingdom, the soul seeks “fun”.



➤ The soul delights in pleasurable things and, becoming addicted to them, always lusts after them. For example:

- looking at bad imagery
- gossiping
- swearing.


➤ Each sense introduces into the soul several lusts or passionate attachments. These lusts lie dormant in the soul until the object of lust is once again experienced by the sense.

➤ Saint James tell us “ Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.” (James 1:15)

➤ **Not only should we prevent our senses from receiving harmful material, but we should train them to give glory to God.**

# How do the eyes lead to sin?


- ❖ Looking at the opposite gender in a lustful manner.



“Whoever looks at a women to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Matt 5:28). How do we expect to see God if our hearts are not pure.

- ❖ Looking at bad explicit material such as pornography.


- ❖ Watching violent movies and arousing anger.



“If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell” (Matt 5:29). Bad materials such as pornography tend to have consequences on the individual even unto marriage, so your not just effecting yourself but also your future wife.



- ❖ Looking with lust at other worldly things, cars, houses, furniture.
- ❖ The evil or envious eyes.



“The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness.” (Matt 6:22-23). Being envious implies we’re not content with what God has given us.

The story of king David should be a reminder to us of how dangerous it is for the eye to wander about without control. How carelessness and lust turned into adultery and murder.

# Proper use of the eyes

- We should not just only train our eyes from looking with lust at anyone or anything but also to see God in everyone and everything.
- A monk was sent by his superior to Alexandria on an errand and when he came back the other monks asked him, “ what is Alexandria like?” He simply answered them, “ I did not purpose to look at anything”. He went there to do some business and not sight seeing, he was able to do this cause he aim and focus was our Lord Jesus Christ.

➤ If you see a beautiful person of the opposite gender instead of making him or her an object of lust, think of God the creator Who made such a beautiful person. If your unable to do so, do not surround yourself with that company for long periods of time.

➤ Finally if you stumble upon something offensive, delete it from your mind and do not entertain the thought.

# Discipline of the ears

➤ Common offense to the ear include:

- Bad music, bad lyrics and even blasphemous lyrics. Music that provokes negative emotions or bad images.
- Listening to heretic talks or watching heretic programs.
- Listening to gossip, which leads to judging other people, forming wrong impressions about them, which ultimately leads to spreading rumours.
- Listening to vain and empty talk. “ But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgement.” (Matt 12:36)



- Remember the story of the monk that was sitting chatting with other monks, then, going to his cell, another monk saw him circling his cell several times. So, he asked him what he is doing. He answered, “ I am getting rid of all the worldly talk we were talking about, because I don’t want to bring it in with me into my cell.
- Listening to flattery, or compliments, when people say good things about you. “Woe to you, when all men speak well of you” (Luke 6:26)

# Proper use of the ears

- Train our ears to perceive God in everything we hear.
- To avoid idle talk, it is very important to avoid things like remaining on the phone for long periods of time with friends.
- Constantly repeat in your mind the words of a beautiful hymn.
- Meditating on the passions of Christ, in doing so the focus remains on God.
- To avoid all flattery, always give glory to God for any positive praise you receive, after all it was God that gifted you with those talents.

# Discipline of the Tongue

➤ Common offense to the tongue include:

- Over indulgence of good food. Remember our mother Eve, one bite into the forbidden food had such a disastrous outcome. Also we know Gluttony
- Listening to heretic talks or watching heretic programs.
- Listening to gossip, which leads to judging other people, forming wrong impressions about them, which ultimately leads to spreading rumours.
- Listening to vain and empty talk. “ But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgement.” (Matt 12:36)

# Discipline of the Tongue

## ➤ Common offense of the tongue include:

- The sense of taste has to be trained so that it does not dictate what one eats all the time. If the stomach and body are not controlled through means of fasting from particular foods, then we will not be in the way of spiritual perfection. Remember Eve, one bite into the forbidden food had such a disastrous outcome.
- The tongue is not only the organ of taste, it is also the organ of speech. Sins of speech, include swearing, lying gossiping, using the name of the Lord in vain and talkativeness. In Matthew 12:36-37, our Lord says “ But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”
- The Fathers tell us that talkativeness is a sign of pride. A talkative person feels that he has lots of wisdom which he feels obliged to share with the world. Talkativeness is the mother of gossip and ruins peoples reputation.



# Proper use of the Tongue

➤ We are reminded by our church, that a successful prayer is one that involves the heart, body and soul all in one accord praising God. Power and self control comes from fasting. A component of fasting requires you to restrict your tongue from eating its desired foods.

➤ The first step in fighting the sin of talkativeness is to realise that it is a sin. Upon acknowledging it is a sin, a person needs to avoid situations that lead to this sin. Situations include things like:

- Long phone conversations.
- Msn conversations
- Facebook conversations.

➤ Next a person has to exercise himself in silence. Saint Arsenius once said, “Many times have I spoken and regretted it, but silence I never regretted.”

***To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, indeed it cannot; and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. Romans (8:6-9)***