

**Old vs. New Man: Vices vs. Virtues
(18th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C)****Col 3:1-5, 9-11—“Put to Death” What is “Earthly” in You**

¹ If then you have been raised with Christ, *seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.* ² *Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.* ³ *For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God.* ⁴ When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. ⁵ *Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.* [⁶ *On account of these the wrath of God is coming.* ⁷ *In these you once walked, when you lived in them.* ⁸ *But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth.*] ⁹ *Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices* ¹⁰ *and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.* ¹¹ Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all. (Col 3:1-5, 9-11)

1. Heavenly vs. Earthly: the “old nature” vs. the “new nature” (3:10)
2. New Morality: stop practicing the worldly vices that filled their former lives as pagans

Old Man—Vices

1. immorality (Greek *porneia*)
 2. impurity (Greek *akatharsia*)
 3. passion (Greek *pathos*)
 4. evil desire
 5. covetousness (Greek *pleonexia*)
 6. anger
 7. wrath
 8. malice
 9. slander (Greek *blasphēmia*)
 10. foul talk (Greek *aischrologia*)
 11. lying
- (Col 3:5, 8)

New Man—Virtues

1. compassion
 2. kindness
 3. lowliness
 4. meekness
 5. patience
 6. forgiveness
 7. love
- (Col 4:12-14)

Testament of Benjamin: I tell you that you will be *sexually immoral* (Greek *porneuō*) like *the immorality of the Sodomites* (Greek *porneian Sodomōn*) and will perish, with few exceptions. You shall resume your *actions with loose women* (*Testament of Benjamin* 9:1; trans. in J. H. Charlesworth)¹

Aristotle: The well-bred man’s jesting differs from that of a vulgar man, and the joking of

¹ In Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1.827. Cf. also *Testament of Reuben* 1:6; *Testament of Judah* 13:6, for the use of *porneia* for incest.

an educated man from that of an uneducated. *One may see this even from the old and the new comedies; to the authors of the former indecency of language (Greek aischrologia) was amusing, to those of the latter innuendo is more so; and these differ in no small degree in respect of propriety (Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics 1128a.).*²

Living Tradition

Catechism: There is no holiness without renunciation and spiritual battle. *Spiritual progress entails the ascesis and mortification* that gradually lead to living in the peace and joy of the Beatitudes. (CCC 2015)

For Further Reading

1. Dennis Hamm, S.J. *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*. Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2013.
2. Brant Pitre, Michael P. Barber, and John Kincaid. *Paul, a New Covenant Jew: Rethinking Pauline Theology*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2019.

² In *The Basic Works of Aristotle* (ed. Richard McKeon; New York, N.Y.: Random House; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1941), 1000.