
Exemplum Corner

Selected exempla from the sermons of Jacques de Vitry

Exemplum CXLVII

A certain serpent carried in its mouth a beautiful rose. Some, looking only at its beauty touched it and smelled it — and were killed by the serpent's venom.

... So flatterers destroy.

Exemplum CXXVII

The ape throws away the nut on account of the bitter rind.

Exemplum LXXVII

Two poor men, one humble and one proud, begged for grain at the mill. The humble one had a small sack and no one refused to fill it. The proud beggar took a big bag which frightened away many possible alms givers.

Exemplum CCLXVIII

Certain monks were forbidden to eat meat unless it was game. So they hunted their pigs with dogs as they would on a hunt.

Exemplum CCXLIV

The Devil begat nine daughters and married them off.

Simony to prelates and clergy,
Hypocrisy to monks and false clergy,
Ripine to soldiers,
Usury to burghers,
Knavery to merchants,
Sacrilege to farmers who did not pay their tithes,
Dishonest Service to workmen,
Rich and Unnecessary Clothing to women,
Lust gave herself upon all like a vile harlot.