

## **Hélinant of Froidmont, Sermon for All Saints day, early 13<sup>th</sup> century**

Why do you, Cistercians who have renounced all things of the world and have made vows of frugality and poverty, build such costly and superfluous houses? You could – indeed you should – have renounced such things and given the money to the poor. “But, you say, the buildings could be made simple and, even if they were more expensive, that does not make them superfluous. Can you find here something to fulfill lust – paintings, or sculptures, or some column bearing stuff? Can you find anything that is not absolutely necessary?” [...] What you build is more palace than rest houses, fortifications than walls, towers than refectories, castles than dormitories, temples than chapter houses, fortresses than chapels, manor than barns. “But, they answer, we do not build these buildings just for us; we build them for the monks to come after us.” “That’s as may be, but their price was so high that they give rise among the laity to more envy than reverence.”

Source : Jacques-Paul Migne (éd.), *Patrologia latina*, vol. 212, 1855, col. 676-678. (Translation by the translator of the course)