1. Introduction

To prepare the colloquium on the pastor bonus, the following leading questions, among others, were put forward: What requirements were asked in the past of those wishing to do pastoral work? What criteria were used in admission? What were the explicit and implicit learning goals of the training? What kind of ideals and models was the vogue in different times and churches? Indeed, a series of questions that may help us to elucidate the standards concerning the clergy in other times, involved in the cura animarum. The sources available carry the risk, however, that the presentation of a historical picture of the pastor bonus ideal is likely to be an enumeration of formal prescriptions, a recount of virtues demanded and vices to be shunned. Everybody knows that the promulgation of precepts of conduct does not necessarily imply also that people live up to them. Yet, ecclesiastical authorities did issue a great many of these kinds of regulations. As such, they at least make clear what was expected from a good pastor. We must take for granted that any enquiry into these kinds of rules of behaviour on first sight presents itself as a catalogue of virtues and vices. Especially in the Middle Ages, various authors, writing for the clergy as well as for lay people, repeatedly contributed to this literary genre. Systematically they drew up lists of virtues and vices, thus articulating the moral discourse of a whole millennium and later. In the following, I will try to give a first glimpse of this enormous field of rubricated morality for clergymen.

2. The first letter of St Paul to Timothy

The requirements for a person who, in the late Middle Ages, wanted to work as a pastor in the Catholic Church, may be taken from the first letter of St Paul to Timothy, chap. 3, 1-13: De ministris ecclesiae. In this epistle, the Apostle had laid down the qualifications for
becoming a bishop, together with the principal requirements for being a deacon. For the medieval church these rules of conduct always stood central. They were the founding principles of every medieval treatise on the required conduct of clerics. Authors of such disquisitions had the evangelical and apostolic description of the good shepherd constantly in mind, when they formulated their views on this subject. The Apostle writes:\footnote{1}

3,1 This saying is trustworthy: ‘If someone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a good work’. 3,2 The overseer then must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, an apt teacher, 3,3 not a drunkard, not violent, but gentle, not contentious, free from the love of money. 3,4 He must manage his own household well and keep his children in control without losing his dignity. 3,5 But if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for the church of God? 3,6 He must not be a recent convert or he may become arrogant and fall into the punishment that the devil will exact. 3,7 And he must be well thought of by those outside the faith, so that he may not fall into disgrace and be caught by the devil’s trap.

3,8 Deacons likewise must be dignified, not two-faced, not given to excessive drinking, not greedy for gain, 3,9 holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. 3,10 And these also must be tested first and then let them serve as deacons if they are found blameless. 3,11 Likewise also their wives must be dignified, not slanderous, temperate, faithful in every respect. 3,12 Deacons must be husbands of one wife and good managers of their children and their own households. 3,13 For those who have served well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and great boldness in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

\footnote{1 The English translation is taken from the NETBible (New English Translation) on Internet, the Latin text from \textit{Biblia sacra Vulgatae editionis} (ed. Ratisbonae/Romae, 1914): “1 Fidelis sermo: Si quis episcopatum desiderat, bonum opus desiderat. 2 Oportet ergo episcopum irreprehensibilem esse, unius uxoris virum, sobrium, prudentem, ornatum, pudicum, hospitalem, doctorem, 3 non violenter, non percussorem sed modestum, non litigiosum, non cupidum, 4 sed suae domui bene praepositum, filios habentem subditos cum omni castitate. 5 Si quis autem domui suae praeesse nescit, quomodo ecclesiae Dei diligenter habebit? 6 Non neophy- tum, ne in superbia elatus in iudicium incidat diaboli. 7 Oportet autem illum et testimonium habere bonum ab his, qui foris sunt, ut non in opprobrium incidat et laqueum diaboli. 8 Diaconi similiter pudicos, non bilingues, non multo vino dedicatos, non turpe lucrum sectantes, 9 habentes mysterium fidei in conscientia pura. 10 Et hi autem probentur primum, et sic ministrant, nullum crimen habentes. 11 Mulleres similiter pudicas, non detrarentes, sobrias, fideles in omnibus. 12 Diaconi sint unius uxoris viri, qui filiis suis bene praesint et suis domibus. 13 Qui enim bene ministraverint, gradum sibi bonum acquirunt, et multam fiduciam in fide, quae est in Christo Iesu”}