

A **Monk** there was, one of the finest sort  
Who rode the country hunting was his sport.  
A manly man, to be an Abbot able;  
Many a dainty horse he had in stable.  
His bridle, when he rode, a man might hear  
Jingling in a whistling wind as clear,  
Aye, and as loud as does the chapel bell  
Where my lord Monk was the head of his cell. [Although he has  
taken a vow of poverty, the Monk is a hunter with a stable of  
horses with expensive bridles.]

The Rule of good St. Benet or St. Maur  
As old and strict he tended to ignore;  
He let go by the things of yesterday  
And took the modern world's more spacious way.  
He did not rate that text at a plucked hen  
Which says that hunters are not holy men. [He is complaining  
about all the rules that he is supposed to live by.]  
This Monk was therefore a good man to horse;  
Greyhounds he had, as swift as birds, to course,  
Hunting a hare or riding at a fence  
Was all his fun, he spared for no expense. [He doesn't worry  
about the money he spends on hunting. He even owns expensive  
hunting dogs.]

I saw his sleeves were garnished at the hand  
With fine gray fur, the finest in the land,  
And on his hood, to fasten it at his chin  
He had a wrought-gold artfully fashioned pin; [He wears

expensive clothes and has a gold pin. No poverty here.]

Into a lover's knot it seemed to pass.

His head was bald and shone like a look-glass;

So did his face, as if it had been greased,

He was a fat and personable priest;

His prominent eyeballs never seemed to settle.

They glittered like the flames beneath a kettle;

Supple his boots, his horse in fine condition.

He was a prelate fit for exhibition,

He was not pale like a tormented soul.

He liked fat swan best, and roasted whole. [It's ironic that the

Monk eats roasted swan, a dish fit for a king. Chaucer is pointing out that the church was no longer what it was supposed to be.]