

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02954-4 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 46 - Action and Contemplation,
(2a2ae. 179-182)

Jordan Aumann O.P.

Frontmatter

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The *Summa Theologiae* ranks among the greatest documents of the Christian Church, and is a landmark of medieval western thought. It provides the framework for Catholic studies in systematic theology and for a classical Christian philosophy, and is regularly consulted by scholars of all faiths and none, across a range of academic disciplines. This paperback reissue of the classic Latin/English edition first published by the English Dominicans in the 1960s and 1970s, in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, has been undertaken in response to regular requests from readers and librarians around the world for the entire series of 61 volumes to be made available again. The original text is unchanged, except for the correction of a small number of typographical errors.

The original aim of this edition was not narrowly ecclesiastical. It sought to make this treasure of the Christian intellectual heritage available to theologians and philosophers of all backgrounds, including those who, without claiming to be believers themselves, appreciate a religious integrity which embodies hardbitten rationalism and who recognise in Thomas Aquinas a master of that perennial philosophy which forms the bedrock of European civilisation. Because of this the editors worked under specific instructions to bear in mind not only the professional theologian, but also the general reader with an interest in the 'reason' in Christianity. The parallel English and Latin texts can be used successfully by anybody with a basic knowledge of Latin, while the presence of the Latin text has allowed the translators a degree of freedom in adapting their English version for modern readers. Each volume contains a glossary of technical terms and is designed to be complete in itself to serve for private study or as a course text.

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Frontmatter

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THOMAS GILBY O.P.

CHRYSOSTOMUS O'BRIEN O.P.

IMPRIMI POTES

GILBERTUS GRAHAM O.P.

Prior Provincialis S. Alberti in S.F.A.

die 24 Octobris 1965

NIHIL OBSTAT

MICHAELIS ASHDOWNE S.T.D., PH.L.

Censor Deputatus

IMPRIMATUR

✠ PATRITIUS CASEY

Vicarius Generalis

die 2 Februarii 1966

Cambridge University Press

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ST THOMAS AQUINAS
SUMMA
THEOLOGIAE

Latin text and English translation,
Introductions, Notes, Appendices
and Glossaries



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(2a2ae. 179-182)

Jordan Aumann O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PIÆ MEMORIÆ

JOANNIS

PP. XXIII

DICATUM

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(2a2ae. 179-182)

Jordan Aumann O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ALLOCUTIO

PAULI

PP. VI

MCMLXIII

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(2a2ae. 179-182)

Jordan Aumann O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI

WAS PLEASED to grant an audience, on 13 December 1963,
to a group, representing the Dominican Editors and the
combined Publishers of the new translation of the *Summa
Theologiae* of St Thomas, led by His Eminence Michael
Cardinal Browne, of the Order of Preachers, and the Most
Reverend Father Aniceto Fernandez, Master General of the
same Order.

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

AT THIS AUDIENCE

THE HOLY FATHER made a cordial allocution in which he first welcomed the representatives of a project in which he found particular interest. He went on to laud the perennial value of St Thomas's doctrine as embodying universal truths in so cogent a fashion. This doctrine, he said, is a treasure belonging not only to the Dominican Order but to the whole Church, and indeed to the whole world; it is not merely medieval but valid for all times, not least of all for our own.

His Holiness therefore commended the enterprise of Dominicans from English-speaking Provinces of the Order and of their friends; they were undertaking a difficult task, less because the thought of St Thomas is complicated or his language subtle, than because the clarity of his thought and exactness of language is so difficult to translate. Yet the successful outcome of their efforts would undoubtedly contribute to the religious and cultural well-being of the English-speaking world.

What gave him great satisfaction was the notable evidence of interest in the spread of divine truth on the part of the eminent laymen concerned, members of different communions yet united in a common venture.

For these reasons the Holy Father wished it all success, and warmly encouraged and blessed all those engaged. He was happy to receive the first volume presented to him as a gesture of homage, and promised that he would follow with interest the progress of the work and look forward to the regular appearance of all the subsequent volumes.

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(2a2ae. 179-182)

Jordan Aumann O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

VOLUMES

PRIMA PARS

- 1 Theology (1a. 1)
- 2 Existence and Nature of God (1a. 2-11)
- 3 Knowing and Naming God (1a. 12-13)
- 4 Knowledge in God (1a. 14-18)
- 5 The Will and Power of God (1a. 19-26)
- 6 The Trinity (1a. 27-32)
- 7 Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (1a. 33-43)
- 8 Creation (1a. 44-9)
- 9 Angels (1a. 50-64)
- 10 Cosmogony (1a. 65-74)
- 11 Man (1a. 75-83)
- 12 Human Intelligence (1a. 84-9)
- 13 Man Made to God's Image (1a. 90-102)
- 14 Divine Government (1a. 103-9)
- 15 The World Order (1a. 110-19)

PRIMA SECUNDÆ

- 16 End Happiness (1a2æ. 1-5)
- 17 Human Acts (1a2æ. 6-17)
- 18 Principles of Morality (1a2æ. 18-21)
- 19 Love and Desire (1a2æ. 22-30)
- 20 Pleasure (1a2æ. 31-9)
- 21 Fear and Anger (1a2æ. 40-8)
- 22 Dispositions for Human Acts (1a2æ. 49-54)
- 23 Virtues (1a2æ. 55-67)
- 24 Gifts and Beatitudes (1a2æ. 68-70)
- 25 Sin (1a2æ. 71-80)
- 26 Original Sin (1a2æ. 81-5)
- 27 Effects of Sin (1a2æ. 86-9)
- 28 Law (1a2æ. 90-7)
- 29 The Old Law (1a2æ. 98-105)
- 30 The Gospel of Grace (1a2æ. 106-14)

SECUNDA SECUNDÆ

- 31 Faith (2a2æ. 1-7)
- 32 Consequences of Faith (2a2æ. 8-16)
- 33 Hope (2a2æ. 17-22)
- 34 Charity (2a2æ. 23-33)

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02954-4 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 46 - Action and Contemplation,
(2a2ae. 179-182)

Jordan Aumann O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

- 35 Consequences of Charity (2a2æ. 34-46)
 36 Prudence (2a2æ. 47-56)
 37 Justice (2a2æ. 57-62)
 38 Injustice (2a2æ. 63-79)
 39 Religion and Worship (2a2æ. 80-91)
 40 Consequences of Religion (2a2æ. 92-100)
 41 The Social Virtues (2a2æ. 101-22)
 42 Courage (2a2æ. 123-40)
 43 Temperance (2a2æ. 141-54)
 44 Parts of Temperance (2a2æ. 155-70)
 45 Mysticism and Miracle (2a2æ. 171-8)
 46 Activity and Contemplation (2a2æ. 179-84)
 47 The Pastoral and Religious Lives (2a2æ. 185-9)

TERTIA PARS

- 48 The Incarnate Word (3a. 1-6)
 49 The Grace of Christ (3a. 7-15)
 50 The One Mediator (3a. 16-26)
 51 Our Lady (3a. 27-30)
 52 The Childhood of Christ (3a. 31-7)
 53 The Life of Christ (3a. 38-45)
 54 The Passion of Christ (3a. 46-52)
 55 The Resurrection (3a. 53-9)
 56 The Sacraments (3a. 60-5)
 57 Baptism and Confirmation (3a. 66-72)
 58 The Eucharistic Presence (3a. 73-8)
 59 The Eucharist (3a. 79-83)
 60 Penance (3a. 84-90)

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978-0-521-02954-4 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 46 - Action and Contemplation,
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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

GENERAL PREFACE

BY OFFICIAL APPOINTMENT THE SUMMA PROVIDES THE FRAMEWORK for Catholic studies in systematic theology and for a classical Christian philosophy. Yet the work, which is more than a text-book for professional training, is also the witness of developing tradition and the source of living science about divine things. For faith seeks understanding in the contemplation of God's Logos, his wisdom and saving providence, running through the whole universe.

The purpose, then, of this edition is not narrowly clerical, but to share with all Christians a treasury which is part of their common heritage. Moreover, it consults the interests of many who would not claim to be believers, and yet appreciate the integrity which takes religion into hard thinking.

Accordingly the editors have kept in mind the needs of the general reader who can respond to the reasons in Christianity, as well as of technical theologians and philosophers.

Putting the Latin text alongside the English is part of the purpose. The reader with a smattering of Latin can be reassured when the translator, in order to be clear and readable, renders the thought of St Thomas into the freedom of another idiom without circumlocution or paraphrase.

There are two more reasons for the inclusion of the Latin text. First, to help the editors themselves, for the author's thought is too lissom to be uniformly and flatly transliterated; it rings with analogies, and its precision cannot be reduced to a table of terms. A rigid consistency has not been imposed on the editors of the different volumes among themselves; the original is given, and the student can judge for himself.

Next, to help those whose native tongue is not English or whose duty it is to study theology in Latin, of whom many are called to teach and preach through the medium of the most widespread language of the world, now becoming the second language of the Church.

The Latin is a sound working text, selected, paragraphed, and punctuated by the responsible editor. Important variations, in manuscripts and such major printed editions as the Piana and Leonine, are indicated. The English corresponds paragraph by paragraph and almost always sentence by sentence. Each of the sixty volumes, so far as is possible, will be complete in itself, to serve as a text for a special course or for private study.

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521393935

© The Dominican Council as Trustee for the English Province of the Order of Preachers 1966
[Excepting Latin text of 'DE VITA ACTIVA ET CONTEMPLATIVA']

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This digitally printed first paperback version 2006

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN-13 978-0-521-39393-5 hardback
ISBN-10 0-521-39393-0 hardback

ISBN-13 978-0-521-02954-4 paperback
ISBN-10 0-521-02954-6 paperback

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978-0-521-02954-4 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 46 - Action and Contemplation,
(2a2ae. 179-182)

Jordan Aumann O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

xi	General Preface
xvii	Editorial Notes
xix	Introduction
	QUESTION 179. ACTIVE AND CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE
2	Article 1. whether the division of life into active and contemplative is acceptable
6	Article 2. whether the division of life into active and contemplative is complete
	QUESTION 180. THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE
12	Article 1. whether the contemplative life has nothing to do with the will, but is entirely the province of intellect
16	Article 2. whether the moral virtues have a part in the contemplative life
20	Article 3. whether there are various activities in the contemplative life
24	Article 4. whether the contemplative life consists only in the contemplation of God or also in the consideration of any truth whatever
30	Article 5. whether in this life the contemplative life can attain the vision of the divine essence
34	Article 6. whether it is correct to assign three movements to the exercise of contemplation, circular, straight and spiral
40	Article 7. whether there is any delight in contemplation
46	Article 8. whether the contemplative life is continuous
	QUESTION 181. THE ACTIVE LIFE
52	Article 1. whether all the acts of the moral virtues belong to the active life
54	Article 2. whether prudence is part of the active life
58	Article 3. whether teaching is an activity of the active or contemplative life
62	Article 4. whether the active life remains after this life
	QUESTION 182. COMPARISON OF THE ACTIVE AND CONTEMPLATIVE WAYS OF LIFE
66	Article 1. whether the active life is nobler than the contemplative
72	Article 2. whether the active life is more meritorious than the contemplative
76	Article 3. whether the contemplative life is hindered by the active life
78	Article 4. whether the active life precedes the contemplative life

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02954-4 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 46 - Action and Contemplation,
(2a2ae. 179-182)

Jordan Aumann O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

	Appendices
85	1. Active and Contemplative Life
90	2. Historical Background
103	3. Contemplation
109	4. Theology and Contemplation
114	5. Christian Life on Earth and in Heaven
117	6. Action and the Interior Life
120	7. The Apostolate
124	Glossary
129	Index

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02954-4 - *Summa Theologiae*: Volume 46 - Action and Contemplation,
(2a2ae. 179-182)

Jordan Aumann O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

EDITORIAL NOTES

THE LATIN TEXT AND TRANSLATION

THE LATIN TEXT follows closely the ‘Leonine’ edition; variant readings have been noted, especially from the Parma and Piana editions, and sometimes have been preferred, in order to make the text clear. For the same reason the punctuation has been adapted.

The English translation has tried to keep close to the original without being literal. In certain instances technical expressions have been retained to avoid excessive circumlocution. Footnotes explain the meaning in such instances, appendices further develop the thought. The glossary provides definitions or alternate terms.

FOOTNOTES

Those signified by a superior number are the references given by St Thomas, with the exception of no. 1 to each article which usually refers to parallel texts in his writings. Those signified alphabetically are editorial references and explanatory remarks.

APPENDICES

The first appendix provides a general commentary on the treatise on the types of life. The second is a survey of Greek philosophers and Fathers of the church who contributed to the doctrine on the active and contemplative life and influenced the teaching of St Thomas. This is developed in Appendices 3–7.

REFERENCES

Biblical references are to the Vulgate, bracketed numbers to the Psalms are those of versions based on the Hebrew text. Patristic references are to Migne (PG, Greek Fathers; PL, Latin Fathers). Abbreviations to St Thomas’s works are as follows:

Summa Theologiae, without title. Part, question, article, reply; e.g. Ia. 3, 2 ad 3. Ia2æ. 17, 6. 2a2æ. 180, 10. 3a, 35, 8.

Summa Contra Gentiles, CG. Book, chapter; e.g. CG I, 28.

Scriptum in IV Libros Sententiarum, Sent. Book, distinction, question, article, solution or *quæstiuncula*, reply; e.g. III Sent. 25, 2, 3, ii ad 3.

Cambridge University Press

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(2a2ae. 179-182)

Jordan Aumann O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

EDITORIAL NOTES

Compendium Theologiæ, Compend. Theol.

Commentaries of Scripture (*lecturæ, expositiones*): Job, *In Job*; Psalms, *In Psal.*; Isaiah, *In Isa.*; Jeremiah, *In Jerem.*; Lamentations, *In Thren.*; St Matthew, *In Matt.*; St John, *In Joan.*; Epistles of St Paul, e.g. *In Rom.* Chapter, verse, *lectio* as required.

Philosophical commentaries: On the *Liber de Causis*, *In De causis*. Aristotle: *Peri Hermeneias*, *In Periherm.*; Posterior Analytics, *In Poster.*; Physics, *In Physic.*; *De Cælo et Mundo*, *In De Cæl.*; *De Generatione et Corruptione*, *In De gen.*; *Meteorologica*, *In Meteor.*; *De Anima*, *In De anima*; *De Sensu et Sensato*, *In De sensu*; *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*, *In De memor.*; Metaphysics, *In Meta.*; Nicomachean Ethics, *In Ethic.*, Politics, *In Pol.* Book, chapter, *lectio* as required, also for Expositions on Boëthius, *Liber de Hebdomadibus* and *Liber de Trinitate*, *In De hebd.* and *In De Trin.*, and on Dionysius, *De Divinis Nominibus*, *In De div. nom.* References to Aristotle give the Bekker annotation.

Quæstiones quodlibetales (de quolibet), Quodl.

Main titles are given in full for other works, including the 10 series of *Quæstiones Disputatæ*.

Denzinger; the number refers to the edition of Schönmetzer, 1963.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Editor of this volume is indebted to Fr Santiago Ramírez, O.P., of Salamanca, whose unpublished lectures were used as the source for numerous explanatory footnotes and the first appendix. He likewise acknowledges with gratitude the patience and the care the manuscript has received from the general editors.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02954-4 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 46 - Action and Contemplation,
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Jordan Aumann O.P.

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

INTRODUCTION

ST THOMAS uses the same terms—active life and contemplative life—to describe the distinct types of life (Q. 179) and the distinct types of religious institutes (Q. 188, 6). As a result, the treatise on the life of action or of contemplation is too often identified with religious life exclusively—which is understandable, since religious most clearly exemplify the two types of life.

The two treatises, however, are independent of each other, except for the fact that Questions 179–182 contain the principles which apply to the differentiation of religious institutes. But these same principles likewise apply to diocesan priests, prelates, and every Christian layman. Indeed, they are essential to an understanding of such questions as the spirituality and apostolate of the priest and the layman.

Many of the problems which the Christian would raise today concerning action and contemplation, are not proposed here; the fundamental principles which point the way to the solution are. Question 179 employs philosophical truths, except for the Scriptural references in the *sed contra* of the two articles. The types of life as they are found in the individual man precisely as human are precisely distinguished; since what is proper to human life is intellect, the division of the types of life is the same as the division of the intellect into speculative and practical.

Questions 180–182 confine the discussion to action and contemplation in the Christian life. St Thomas gives full theological dimension to the distinction made in Question 179, explaining the role of charity and the will in the contemplative operation and the moral virtues in the active life. The reader is well advised to examine these Questions with this in mind: whether the Christian types of life would not be better classified in terms of the twofold precept of charity, love of God and love of neighbour. This problem, touching on the worth of St Thomas's approach, we deal with in Appendix 5.