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978-0-521-02926-1 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 18 - Principles of Morality, (1a2ae. 18-21)

Thomas Gilby O.P.

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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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Prior Provincialis Angliæ

die 20 Maii 1965

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Vicarius Generalis

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ST THOMAS AQUINAS

SUMMA
THEOLOGIAE

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



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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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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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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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T. C. O'BRIEN O.P.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

THE TEXT AND TRANSLATION

The Parma text, used as the first basis of the translation, has been corrected usually in accordance with the Leonine edition. The paragraphs, however, have been broken up to suit the convenience of the English reader, and the punctuation is not so prodigal as in French and Italian printed volumes of the *Summa*. The translation attempts to match the order of the sentences in the original and at the same time to present a vernacular flow of discourse. At one extreme there could be a fixed word-for-word translation, but this at the present day would not really tell us what St Thomas was thinking about, and anyhow would fall dead. At the other extreme there could be a free commentary which would have to defend itself against being like the book of the film of the book. How far they have been avoided the reader will judge by studying the right-hand page, and then the left-hand page.

FOOTNOTES

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

REFERENCES

Biblical references are to the Vulgate. 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. 1a. 3, 2 ad 3. 1a2æ. 17, 6. 2a2æ. 180, 10. 3a. 35, 8.

Summa Contra Gentiles, CG. Book, chapter; e.g. CG 1, 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.

Compendium Theologiae, *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.

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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*.

Denz. refers to Denzinger-Schönmetzer, Freiburg, 1963.

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An English translation of these discussions prepared by Miss N. Herdsman for a course of London University Extension Lectures was consulted with great profit, and the editor here professes his grateful indebtedness. He offers this volume to the Dominicans of Barry College, Miami, Florida: but for the understanding and welcome and warmth they gave it would not now be appearing. *Hospes fui.*

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INTRODUCTION

'Principle' is a wider term than 'cause' and can refer to a start in any sort of way.¹ In this sense it appears in the title of this volume. For the conclusions St Thomas arrives at in the four Questions here discussed neither comprehend his entire moral teaching nor constitute its complete premises: that even these do not pretend to be the truths from which all the decisions of Christian practice can be deduced will appear later. All he is doing is laying philosophical foundations for a systematic moral theology.

Much of the material had been already half-shaped by his predecessors. From St Augustine came the majestic doctrine of the Eternal Law, from Abelard the importance of intention counterstressing the more impersonal categories of the Roman lawyers; and four generations of masters before the rediscovery of the *Nicomachean Ethics* had struggled to bring the untidily strewn pieces of natural, Scriptural, ecclesiastical, and civil precepts into some sort of order.² He was the first to achieve a moral theology which was a science in the strict sense of the word, a rational articulation of parts composing a consistent and overall structure.³

All the same he never thought that it enclosed all that was engaged in the mystery of human choices within the greater mystery of God's choosing men to live in friendship with him in Christ. Even on the level of philosophy he well recognized, as Aristotle did, that no theory of necessity can offer a complete explanation of facts of contingency, among which should be reckoned the events of human practice.⁴ Furthermore a rational statement, however inspired by faith, can only partially catch and represent God's revelation and his gift of grace.⁵ So then, even a complete moral theology, can lay no claim to enter the heart of human communion with God, which cannot properly be translated out of actual living with him and loving him and seeing him.

Actual seeing, however, is deferred, and in the meantime faith seeks

¹cf 1a. 33, 1. *In Meta.* v, lect. 1 (1013a)

²cf O. Lottin, *Psychologie et morale aux xii^e et xiii^e siècles*. 6 vols. Gembloux-Louvain, 1942-60. J. de Ghellinck, *L'essor de la littérature latine au xii^e siècle*. Paris, 1946. J. Rohmer, *La finalité morale chez les théologiens de saint Augustin à Duns Scot.* Paris, 1939. H. V. Jaffa, *Thomism and Aristoteleanism*. A study of the commentary by Thomas Aquinas on the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Chicago, 1952

³Vol. I of this series, Appendix 6. For the framework see V. J. Bourke, *Ethics*. A Textbook in Moral Philosophy. New York, 1951

⁴2a2ae. 47, 3

⁵cf 1a. 1, 8; 2a2ae. 1, 2

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understanding, and understanding which comes through the terms of reason working on human experience. *Intellectus* and *Scientia* are Gifts of the Spirit that correspond to faith,⁶ and through them the mind both broadens out and deepens in its possession of divine truth; it is also enabled to break the good news to others, and in the only sure medium of communication for many, namely speech that makes sense. We have said that communion with God cannot be properly translated; it does not follow that attempts at translation are improper in the sense of being either irreverent or impertinent, or that reasoned discourse about the mystery is uncommitted or even always working on the outside. It was charity itself that urged St Thomas to give to us the overflow of his faith into perennial philosophy, and it would not have occurred to him that loving God and writing about him were severely separate functions.

‘Well hast thou written about me, Thomas,’ the voice spoke to him according to legend. ‘What shall I give thee?’ ‘Nothing, Lord,’ he replied, ‘unless it be thyself.’ All the same, last in execution is first in intention; he gave from what he had already received, and from his heart spoke in dry speech. ‘Like straw,’ he admitted towards the end of his life—but then straw, we may remember, has borne food and helps to make bricks. What mattered most to him in writing the *Summa* would be missed were its moral theology to be treated merely as ‘onlooker ethics’.

Nevertheless long passages can be studied in such a spirit of detachment, and, what is more, for a period they should be so studied. The reasoning mind, rightly suspicious of short cuts, attend to its notions one at a time, and may even delay on ‘God’ as a particular notion and recognize the inadequacy indeed, yet no distraction from the search for his reality. For as he can be served by well and truly scrubbing a floor without need for explicit religious reference, so the mind is with him still when it gets down to quite creaturely matters of interest. In these the *Summa* abounds, and it delays on them in order to find God, and not in any temper of apology for relaxing its effort. Error about creatures leads to error about their creator,⁷ a faulty philosophy can lead to a faulty theology, and though God can be contemplated without a scholastic technique, and be worshipped through symbol and ritual, it would be presuming to claim that his truth can be taught without an ascetical discipline in logic and meaning.

The present treatise should be read in this light. Its immediate purpose is not to proclaim a transcendent value or the holiness of God, but to map the area and establish the conditions of moral activity. This is seen as rooted

⁶2a2ae. 8 & 9

⁷CG II, 2-4

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in the world of nature and yet pointing to a world beyond. It is committed to outward deeds and their consequences, yet it lies in the inner mind and will charged with the intention of finding God. As shaped to the structure of the universe it can be expressed in general statements and laws about types of activity; these are valid yet they are qualified by individual circumstances, and the rule of objective right is tender to the subjective sincerity of conscience even when mistaken.

At first sight it might seem that all this could be done by a moral philosophy inspired by a classical and liberal spirit, perhaps tintured with Christianity. The treatise, however, is integrated in *sacra doctrina*, the teaching of the Gospel Revelation, and its full import can be appreciated only when it is read as a living part of this organic whole. Nevertheless the modesty of its immediate claims appears from its placing between two sections largely devoted to non-moral matters, the first on the nature of happiness and the psychological components of human acts reaching for it,⁸ the second on the emotions and the psychological dispositions or 'habits' strengthening human powers.⁹ It is not until he reaches the virtues that St Thomas begins to get into his stride as a moral theologian, not until he reaches the Gifts and the Fruits of the Spirit, the Beatitudes and the Gospel Law that it lengthens, not until he has dwelt on the activities of faith, hope, and charity, the greatest of these, and has taken them into our living and dying and rising again with Christ can he be said to be nearing the end of his half-completed course.

⁸1a2ae.1-17. cf Appendix 1

⁹1a2ae. 22-54. For St Thomas's study of Aristotle's moral philosophy see his *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by C. I. Litzinger. 2 vols. Chicago, 1964.