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978-0-521-02934-6 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 26 - Original Sin,
(1a2ae. 81-85)

T. C. O'Brien O.P.

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The *Summa Theologiæ* 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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die 15 Novembris 1964

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Censor Deputatus

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✠ PATRITIUS A. O'BOYLE

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Washingtonii, die 17 Novembris 1964

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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.

THOMAS GILBY O.P.

T. C. O'BRIEN O.P.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

THE TEXT AND TRANSLATION

THE LATIN text relies chiefly on the 'Leonine' edition, commissioned by Leo XIII towards the end of the last century. Any variation from this has been carefully chosen from alternative readings found in manuscripts or earlier editions, and duly noted. The attempt has not been to establish a critical text, but to offer a sound working version; the choice of variants has been dictated by their proximity to St Thomas's general usage and to the thought of the entire context. The punctuation is that of the editor.

The English has been prepared with a view to being read independently of the Latin, though reference to this has been made easy. Technical terms are explained in the notes. The temptation to translate by circumlocution or explanatory rendering has been vigorously suppressed. Where there is no explanation of a term the reader finds to be technical, the glossary can generally be relied on for assistance.

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.

APPENDICES

Two sorts of appendices are provided. The first, 1-6, give the background indispensable to the study of the *Summa* development of the question of original sin, namely its status in the teaching of the Church, in Scripture, and in the history of theology. The second, 7-9, are designed as a kind of commentary to explain St Thomas's procedures and to spell out their implications.

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:

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Summa Theologiae, without title. Part, question, article, reply; e.g. 1a. 3, 2 ad 3. 1a2ae. 17, 6. 2a2ae. 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 *quaestiuncula*, reply; e.g. III *Sent.* 25, 2, 3, ii ad 3.

Compendium Theologiae, *Compend. Theol.*

Commentaries of Scripture (*lecturae, 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 Caelo et Mundo*, *In De Cael.*; *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 Boethius, *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.

Quaestiones quodlibetales (*de quolibet*), *Quodl.*

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

The views represented in the footnotes and appendices, which are those of the Editor of this volume, are in some cases not shared by the Editorial Board and other collaborators.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to thank Fr Thomas Gilby O.P. for assistance that was personal and far beyond the call of his general editorial duty. I am also deeply indebted to Fr W. U. Voll O.P. for the notes on Question 84 and to Miss Florence Gaudet T.O.P., for her generous and careful work preparing the typescript.

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INTRODUCTION

IN THE editing of this volume there has been a choice of contents in order to bring out the theology of original sin, and the choice requires some explanation. This becomes clear from a glance at the context of Questions 81–5 within St Thomas's treatise *On Vices and Sins* (1a2ae. 71–89), which is developed under the following six headings:

1. The definition of vices and sins (71);
2. Their distinction one from another (72);
3. Their comparison to one another (73);
4. The subject of sin (74);
5. The cause of sin (75–84);
6. The effect of sin (85–9).

Instead of corresponding to one or more of these headings, this volume contains several Questions from under the fifth and one from under the sixth and last. This choice appeals for justification simply to the prominence original sin must have for any Christian theologian because of its bearing both upon the meaning of man's history of salvation and upon any normative judgment about his moral situation. So then the teaching of St Thomas, about original sin is of the highest order of interest. His *ex professo* discussion in the *Summa Theologiae* is contained not only in Questions 81–3, but also in Question 85 on the effect of sin. Accordingly this volume has been planned with a view to unity of content and keeps together the development of the topic, even at the risk of blurring the procedural reasons that dictate the division of the treatise on sins. The bearing of this division has not in fact been ignored; it is kept before the reader's mind both here and in volumes 25 and 27.

From the outset it is indispensable to recall the immediate context of Questions 81–3 under the heading, 'the cause of sin'. By this expression St Thomas indicates the influences leading to a person's acting in a way that is morally bad. After discussing how sin can have a cause (75), he looks to its various types; these include forces both within (76–8) and external to a person (79–83), and also one's own sins as leading to others (84). The inquiry into original sin thus has its place in the *Summa* under the consideration of the outside forces that bring about sin. Specifically the question is how one human being can be the cause of another's sin: 'While one person may be the cause of another's sinning by external enticement, just as the devil is, yet a man has also a way of causing sin that is special, namely by way of origin' (81, Foreword). After dutifully surveying an old pastoral tradition about root sins, or source sins, or capital sins (84),

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St Thomas returns to his teaching on original sin and adds to it in the first Question on the effects of sin (85). These are the toll it takes on the sinner, either in that by sinful action itself the capacity for moral agency beneficial to his quest for happiness is affected (85), or in that by sin he makes himself liable to punishment (86–9).

The *Summa* differs from other works of St Thomas in assigning within its doctrinal plan the place of original sin. In the *Commentary on the Second Book of Sentences*, Distinction 29 ff. the topic enters into the discussion of man's need for God's grace; in *Contra Gentes* IV, 52 ff., and in the *Compendium Theologiae* 196 ff., into the consideration of the redemptive Incarnation. These arrangements are well founded, and indicate the far-reaching relevance of the dogma of original sin to all theology. In the *Summa*, however, the procedure is dictated by the over-all purpose of presenting its materials 'according to the requirements of a sound educational method', or briefly, the '*ordo disciplinae*' (*Prima Pars*, Foreword). The plan adopted by the *Summa* is obviously not that of the pedagogy of the Scriptures which shows God himself leading his people to accept by faith the way of salvation. There the order of teaching is historical and follows his own gradually unfolding plan; its mode is pastoral, its purpose to evoke the response of saving faith. While so different in method and mode, both the Bible and the *Summa* propose divine truth to the mind of man. The *Summa* presupposes and depends upon faith's assent to the word of God. Its purpose, to bring us to some understanding, and the discourse it opens for this purpose, respect the fact that with faith there is a concomitant response of mind to the meaning of the truths faith accepts. A 'sound educational method' seeks to make this response a service rather than an obstacle to faith. To set forth sacred truth accordingly is not to force God's word into human categories, but rather to seek to adjust man's mind to the order in the divine truths themselves. There are presuppositions here: that the intelligence is a truth faculty and bent towards the discernment of reality and the structured order there; that since God's word is a word of truth, the content of his revelation is real and manifests inherent ontological order. Revealed mysteries ever remain mysteries, and the solely decisive response of mind must ever be faith. But the design of the *Summa* reflects the conviction that the exercise of the powers of mind according to its best resources does yield some positive conformity of intellect to the order inherent in the truths God has revealed. What God has revealed historically and pastorally in the Bible, the *Summa* sets forth either as belonging to God himself or as referring to him as their source or purpose. But it seeks also more particular interrelationships among the elements of God's revelation, and their subordination within the whole structure of divine truth.

In the present case, the broad viewpoint of the *Summa* opens out in

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many directions. Original sin shares with its general topic 'vices and sins', what one might call a place of remoteness from God. In keeping with the *Genesis* account of the creation, man is considered in the *Prima Pars* as he came forth from God and was found to be good. Sin is entirely the work of man, not of God; it is kept for discussion as a deviation from man's return to God, the theme of the *Secunda Pars*. Since 'through one man sin entered into the world' (*Romans* 5, 12) original sin exercises a priority in the history both of the race and of every man's moral life. Yet to follow with the main Scriptural portrayal of sin and also to emphasize the problem original sin raises, St Thomas subordinates its examination to that of personal sin. In its slowly more explicit revelation of the intimacy of man's personal relationship with God, Scripture presents sin as above all the rupture of this bond and as separation from God. Sin in this sense is the chief concern of the treatise on vices and sins; Christian custom calls it 'mortal sin'.

Both the Bible and theology envisage sin as applying to morally responsible acts of adults. This view raises the chief problem about original sin. Sin means a personal act, individual responsibility, a wilful separation from God. But this does not fit guilt by origin, guilt anterior to any personal choice. Now St Thomas's inquiry into the meaning of original sin does not rank it on the level of the primary meaning of sin, but subordinates it within the section on the cause of sin. He avoids thus the misguided attempt of some theologians before and after him to seek its meaning as though somehow it were a fault voluntary by each man's will. His focus is on the revelation of a sin derived by carnal descent, and, as will appear, he finds in the general teaching about sin in its proper and personal sense a meaningful analogy to show how original sin is true sin.

There is a further significance in the doctrinal location of this discussion, one that is faithful to St Paul's message that through one man sin entered into the world. St Thomas states that original sin is, in a sense, the cause of all sins (82, 2 ad 1); this is brought out simply by investigating original sin among the causes of personal sins, which remain the chief interest of theologians here. In the history of the race and of the individual it does stand as the origin of sin. The reign of sin began with the fall of Adam; the power of sin as St Paul refers to it manifests itself in the personal sins of all men. All *have* sinned. From the loss of grace that original sin entails, all men are incapable of the decisive choice that will rectify them morally. Without Christ, mankind must remain unjustified and a prey to sin. All men manifest by sinful moral choices of false values that they are deprived of grace because of original sin. Moreover, even in the baptized the after-effects of original sin remain, the ignorance, weakness and unruly desires that underlie the many sins of the just. The moral damage is real, and

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continually the source of personal separation from God. The place the discussion holds in the *Summa*, then, is not just an arrangement in the interest of neatness, but is demanded by the theological import of the mystery as it is proposed by revelation.

The internal order among Questions 81–3 may be described in terms of logical procedure. St Thomas often repeats that we must first know *that* something exists before we can know *what* it is. So here, the transmission of original sin (81), the fact that sin is in us through carnal origin, precedes inquiry into its essence (82) and where it lies in the various parts of man's nature (83). One might also see a distribution of material according to the causes: first the efficient cause of original sin (81), then its internal causes within man's nature (82) affecting his powers (83). Again, a parallel with the inquiry into personal sin can be suggested: 81 corresponds to 71, 82 to 72, 83 to 74. One might also see the method familiar and necessary to theology according to which a mystery, unknowable save by revelation, must first be recognized as a fact (81), before anything of what it means (82–3) can be discerned.

But the development manifests a structure more profound and one rising from the revealed reality itself. Revelation in fact enunciates one essential point about original sin: every man is heir to true sin just by being a member of the human race. This is the mystery. St Thomas makes it the central point of his discussion, the first to be considered and the one that regulates the entire inquiry. He offers his own expression of the meaning of the mystery in 81, 1. For here is the unique mark of original sin: it is before all else the sin that comes about through our carnal descent from Adam. From this principle St Thomas argues to the way in which it can be understood as sin, how it is caused, by whom and in whom (81). Here existence does precede essence; original sin is a loss affecting every man and its Nature can be judged only in contrast to what was lost by the historical source of humanity, the first man (82). Upon its being just original sin, so that each person as it were passively inherits it, depends the meaning of its inherence in the various powers of human nature (83). Only when original sin has been consistently seen as sin caused by origin, can we rightly approach the matter, so popularly distorted, of just what *fallen nature* means (85). These questions, then, are developed not merely by a logically contrived order, but by allowing the reality of the truth itself to guide their progress. In the face of all that had been written by others before him, and considering all that has been written since, St Thomas's treatment stands, 'concise and clear, so far as the matter allows' (*Prima Pars*, Foreword). He was not unaware, not even completely uninfluenced by the historical background of the theology of original sin. But his touch here as elsewhere is evident; he does see and remains remarkably close to

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what the truth itself demands and what God has spoken about this mystery. This part of the *Summa* deserves great credit by its respect for the word of God, Sacred Scripture, and for the work of God, the mind of man. It pays homage to God's word by the honest attempt to provide some understanding of how what God has revealed is true. In so doing it offers insights that keep our thinking about this mystery worthy of a faith that is an assent to divine truth, not the acceptance of a cruel divine whim to be justified by invented devices, or of a myth before which reason must remain mutely agnostic.