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978-0-521-02935-3 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 27 - Effects of Sin, Stain and Guilt, (1a2ae. 86-89)

T. C. O'Brien

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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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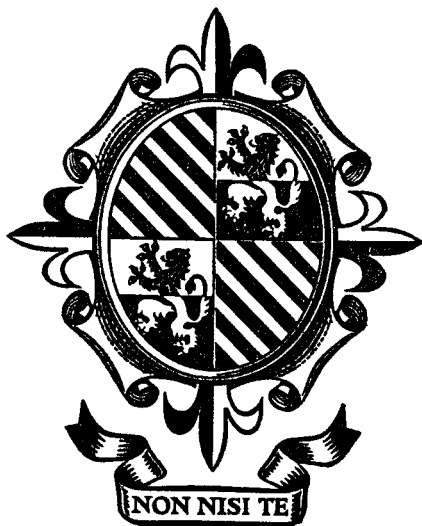
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SUMMA
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Latin text and English translation,
Introductions, Notes, Appendices
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PIÆ MEMORIÆ

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IN AN AUDIENCE, 13 December 1963, to a group representing the Dominican Editors and the combined Publishers of the New English *Summa*, His Holiness Pope Paul VI warmly welcomed and encouraged their undertaking. A letter from His Eminence Cardinal Cicognani, Cardinal Secretary of State, 6 February 1968, expressed the continued interest of the Holy Father in the progress of the work, 'which does honour to the Dominican Order, and the Publishers, and is to be considered without doubt as greatly contributing to the growth and spread of a genuinely Catholic culture', and communicated his particular Apostolic Blessing. The assurance was repeated in a letter, 5 February 1973, from the present Secretary of State, His Eminence Cardinal Villot.

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Non vult ergo Deus ut timeatur serviliter ab hominibus quasi dominus, sed ut diligatur quasi pater, qui adoptionis spiritum donavit hominibus.

St Thomas Aquinas, *Catena Aurea*
on *Matthew 22*, 40

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[Excepting Latin text of 'DE MACULA PECCATI ET DE REATU PŒNÆ']

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EDITORIAL NOTES

THE TEXT AND TRANSLATION

THE LATIN text corresponds at most points to that of the Leonine edition, commissioned at the end of the last century by Leo XIII. Variant readings from the Piana edition of 1570-1, commissioned by Pius V (modern edition, Ottawa, 1941-5), are noted throughout, and where they seem more in keeping with the sense, substituted in the text. Paragraphing and punctuation of the Latin text are those of the editor. The English has been prepared to be read independently, but reference to the Latin text is obviously encouraged and facilitated in this edition. Conviction about the style of St Thomas as well as experience with students having no prior acquaintance with his thought or knowledge of Latin have inclined me towards plainness in the translation. The Latin is deliberately impersonal, sparse, colourless. The vocabulary is neither rich nor imaginative; the phraseology is often dependent on academic conventions; arguments are at times snippets remembered from other disputations, sometimes garbled in their diction for use in the *Summa*. Literacy is not St Thomas's preoccupation; reading his Latin requires a degree of *intus legere*; the editor believes that a translation should not require more than this 'reading inside', but that it should not by flare or folksiness put the reader off from the requirement of getting inside to the idea.

FOOTNOTES

Those signified by a superior number are usually the references given by St Thomas and tracked down by the Leonine Commission, 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 to Migne (PG, Greek Fathers; PL, Latin Fathers). When the English titles are well known, references to the works of St Thomas and Aristotle are in English. Titles of St Thomas's works are abbreviated as follows:

Summa Theologiae, without title. Part, question, article, reply; e.g. 1a. 70, 1 ad 2. 2a2ae. 25, 4.

Summa Contra Gentiles, CG. Book, chapter; e.g. CG 11, 14.

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Scriptum in IV Libros Sententiarum, Sent. Book, distinction, question, article, solution or *quæstiuncula*, reply; e.g. *II Sent.* 15, 1, 1, ii ad 3.

Compendium Theologiæ, Compend. theol.

Scriptural commentaries (*lecturæ, expositiones, reportata*): Job, *In Job*; Psalms, *In Psal.*; Isaiah, *In Isa.*; Jeremiah, *In Jerem.*; St Matthew, *In Matt.*; St John, *In Joann.*; Epistles of St Paul, e.g. *In I Cor.* 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.*; *Metereologica*, *In De metereor.*; *De anima*, *In De anima*; *De sensu et sensato*, *In De sensu*; *De memoria et reminiscencia*, *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 numeration.

Quæstiones quodlibetales, Quodl.

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

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

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THE contents of this volume, 27 in the series, do not match an integral segment of the treatise on sin in the *Summa Theologiae*. Because of the importance of the doctrine of original sin, the editorial decision to make the Questions on it a separate volume (Vol. 26) was sound. And the connection of the problem of fallen nature with original sin in theological tradition required the inclusion of Question 85 in Volume 26. As a consequence Volume 27 contains only four of the five Questions on the effect of sin. For convenience it is well to set out here the six main divisions of the entire treatise on sin:

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).

Under this last heading the procedure is as follows:

‘We should next consider the effects of sin: first of all, the damage to the good of nature (85); secondly, the stain of soul (86); thirdly, liability to punishment’ (87–9).¹

To link the present Questions with Volume 26 it is enough to point out how the privative character of all that relates to sin is a constant. Original sin is transmitted because nature functions as a cause deprived of the gifts it should have (81). Original sin is privation, lack of the primitive positive relationship to God and the lack of the interior harmony in man’s powers (82–3). Fallen nature is fallen in the sense of this lack, not in the sense of total depravity (85). The stain of sin is privation of the splendour of grace (86). Guilt is a state of deserving to be punished, i.e. involuntarily deprived of the goods of grace and nature (87). Venial sin is sin in a qualified sense because it is a privative disorder only in a limited sense (88–9). This thread of continuity runs through the whole treatise on sin, because the privative character of evil—an idea found in Plotinus and applied in Christian theology in its disputes with Gnosticism and Manichæism—is the theme that St Thomas varies in his own way as he faces the problems connected with sin.

The Questions in the present volume were not of such great interest to me as those in Volume 26 when I undertook this assignment. But they

¹1a2ae. 85, Foreword

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became so; I learned once again that, like the cathedral at Chartres, there are inexhaustible possibilities to perceive inner order, integrated intricacy, harmonious unity—and they are all intended. In Roman Catholic circles the day of sanctioned admiration for the systematizing, synthesizing powers of St Thomas has passed. One was expected to be impressed often enough by the wrong things anyway; the use of the Aristotelean syllogism was neither original with him, nor the mark of his most personal contribution. That logical apparatus is there, to the consternation of many and the revulsion of some. There is also, and much more so, *intellectus*, insight, a settling on a relatively few intelligible elements as foundational to a thought-framework for the most profound and heart-touching Christian teachings. Professor Erik Persson has seen deeply into this, in proposing the theme that St Thomas has shaped the word of God in revelation into a presupposed, very simple conceptual framework.² There is much truth in the thesis; the intention that the *Summa* proceed according to the ‘order of learning’ (*secundum ordinem disciplinæ*)³ presupposes an order of being and intelligibility that is being read into the economic, historical mode of biblical revelation. The *Summa* intends to match that order in its own pedagogical order.⁴ The soundness of such a theology depends in great measure on the soundness of the metaphysics used to trace the ontological and intelligible priorities within the revealed word.

If, in pursuing this plan, St Thomas in fact is pressing the revealed word into categories that straiten it, then he is violating his own strictures against using reason in theology in such a way that ‘in matters of faith reason take precedence and not vice versa, namely when anyone wishes to believe only that which can be discovered by reason’;⁵ and ‘that the things which are of faith be subjected under the dimensions of philosophy, so that one wants to believe only what can be possessed through philosophy, whereas instead philosophy has to be brought under the dimensions of faith.’⁶ In editing this volume I have not found St Thomas violating these canons; the Appendices indicate in some detail how the meaning of revelation transforms the philosophical categories that function in these Questions. But here there are some things to be said of a general nature, appropriate to an Introduction. The central conviction that I have derived from these Questions is that the treatise on sin is dominated by the

²See Persson, Erik, *Sacra Doctrina: Reason and Revelation in Aquinas*, tr. J. A. R. Mackenzie (Fortress Press, 1970)

³Ia. Foreword

⁴The principles of the being and of the truth of anything are the same. *In Poster.* I, *lect.* 4

⁵*In De Trin.* II, 1

⁶*ibid* 3

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revelation of charity⁷ and that there is no theology of sin without reference to charity's primacy. This is not really 'discovering the Mediterranean' or reinventing the wheel.

The personal, the intimate relationship between God and man is not immediately obvious in the *Secunda Pars*; to read it requires, in a sense, a re-personalizing of its thought. For one thing there is the impersonal and sparse quality of the language. This is not just an impression evoked by contact with a piece of Scholastic literature. It has been critically demonstrated that St Thomas is not concerned with the literal accuracy of texts; that he is sometimes heedless of grammar; that he deliberately chooses to empty his text of all but the most essential elements. What is called his *abstractio mentis* is a matter of personal choice and style, to be intent on ideas, on the intelligible and to do away with any encumbrances or dressing.⁸ Along with this, which applies to any of his works, there is the fact that simultaneously with the composition of the *Secunda Pars* he devoted his efforts to the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* and the *Tabula libri Ethicorum*.⁹ For him it was all the one project: he worked on the *Ethics* of Aristotle because he saw in it the instrument for the intelligible expression of Christian moral theory. As Gauthier points out,¹⁰ he could fashion such an instrument only by sublimating the terrestrial ethic and dialectical method of Aristotle. There was no confusion about the limitations, even the conflict, of Aristotle's theory *vis-à-vis* the Gospel. We misread the situation if we think of St Thomas as acquiring from Aristotle a basic moral theory and then trying to make the Christian message fit into it. What was absolutely clear, what he assumed as the *principia revelata*,¹¹ was the meaning of eternal life, grace, charity. What might have delighted him was the amenability, in his interpretation, of elements and principles in Aristotle to the articulation of 'the movement of the rational creature towards God'.¹² When it comes to the personal relationship of man to God,

⁷By this I mean as simple a notion of charity as is conveyed in the scriptural command to love God with one's whole heart and mind and soul and strength. 'God does not want to be feared servilely as lord, but to be loved as Father, who has given to men the spirit of adoption of sons.' *Catena aurea Matthew 22*, 40

⁸See Gauthier, R.-A., O.P., 'Præfatio' in *Sententia libri Ethicorum* (*S. Thomæ de Aquino Omnia Opera*, XLVII, vol. 1, Rome, 1969) esp. 179*-201*; and 'Saint Thomas et l'Éthique à Nicomaque' in *Sententia libri Politicorum* (*S. Thomæ de Aquino Omnia Opera*, XLVIII, Rome, 1971) esp. xiii-xiv; xv-xxv

⁹The *Tabula libri Ethicorum* had not been given among St Thomas's authentic works since the 14th century, until the Leonine edition, prepared by Gauthier

¹⁰See Gauthier, R.-A., *Aristote: l'Éthique à Nicomaque* (Louvain, 1970) t. 1, Introduction, 130-132; 275-276

¹¹See Ia. 1, 2

¹²Ia.2, Foreword

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uppermost in St Thomas's mind is the personalness of it all, the literalness of a text like 'Whatsoever you do unto the least of my brethren, that you do unto me.' It takes no insight nor historical study whatever to be aware that what is most proper and distinctive in the Judæo-Christian world view is the personalness of the relationship between God and man. That is a theological datum that no one has to discover. The theology of sin, or any of the theology of St Thomas, does not have to be reinterpreted or protracted so that it may be shown to extend to the personal. What needs to be seen is that this is what the language and the technique are chosen to express. To re-personalize means to realize, by knowing what the language and technique mean, that they do serve to express fundamental Christian insights, in this case the essence of charity and thereby the essence of sin.

The *Secunda Pars* divides its consideration of the movement of the rational creature towards God into two main sections: one on the end (1a2æ. 1-5), the other on the human act in relation to the end (1a2æ. 6-2a 2æ. 1-189). The end is the total good, the good above all for man; the actions of man have their meaning in relationship to that end—in being finalized or not by the true end these acts get their specific quality as good or bad. The doctrinal structure looks to the dynamism of a real final causality. That vehicle of exposition—read into Aristotle's organization of the *Ethics*—gives the *Summa* its 'it' and 'that which' tone; it makes the author ready to speak in terms of objects, of ultimate and not ultimate ends, of acting for and against an order to ultimate end. What he is really talking about is 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . .' and every other biblical text that points to the reality of God's love for man as his child and of man for God as his Father. For reasons that are more fully discussed in Appendix 1, this biblical revelation of love is what allows the choice of the philosophical technique and concepts. Only the revelation that there is a personal bond between God and man established by grace makes it possible to speak of acting for the sake of *God* as ultimate end, as the 'good loved for itself' or for acting in a way that separates from the ultimate end. However impersonal the philosophical categories may sound, 'to act for the sake of the ultimate end for its own sake' is to love. The only good that can be loved for its own sake by the rational creature is not an 'it' at all; it is a person.¹³ A person is at least the co-objective in every act of love; when something less than a person is said to be loved, it is loved for a person, for oneself or for one's friend. When it is a case of loving some existing reality as the good, just because it is good and as it is, for its own sake, then that objective is a person. When such a good is real, is in fact a total good, lovable above all else, as it is and for its own sake, then the 'it' is God.

¹³See 1a2æ. 26, 4 & 27, 3

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The true finalization, the true movement of the rational creature towards God, is the love of God and the life of love. The concepts and the philosophical assessments involved do express the same sort of relationship that the biblical relationship of charity declares. But it is the revelation that leads to the selection of these categories and that justifies their use. No personal relationship of the kind that is notionally expressed by these concepts can be asserted existentially except because it has been initiated by God and revealed to be a fact. It is not a system of finality already given, nor a rational assertion of a relationship to God that is antecedently maintained and then allowed to be coloured and heightened by an overlay of revelation.¹⁴ The revelation of charity is not straitened into a rational framework; the meaning of charity allows and even calls for the form of expression given to it in this theology. Because such an order of priorities operates in this theological epistemology, it is not surprising that the treatise on sin, its guilt and punishment, should bring the mind directly up against the primacy of charity. Such a realization is a re-personalizing, but only in the sense that it is the vivid perception of what is there. The vehicle of expression is there as well, because St Thomas thinks the use of an intelligible expression of 'how what is said is true' to be part of the sapiential function of theology.¹⁵ No one need accept this way of theologizing—the era of respecting canonical approbation is now the good old days, which is just as well. But there is an Irish song; changing a word or two it comes out, 'Thomas, they hardly knew you.'

The discovery of the presence of charity in the treatment of sin emphasizes that his is a moral of the good, one that lets the Gospel of love have its effect. To be aware of that is to be aware that St Thomas's moral vision has been lost—if indeed it was ever shared—in moral theology. At least since the 14th century the spirit dominant in moral studies has been alien to his. The details of that opposition need not be catalogued;¹⁶ it is the opposition between a moral of the good and a moral of evil. The second, which concentrates on sins and prohibitions, effectively presupposes the worst of people or at best that they stand in isolated detachment from either good or evil, waiting for law to shackle that neutral freedom by imposing the good and forbidding the evil. This moral treats all who live under the New Law as if they were living under the Old.¹⁷ In terms that most happily catch the ontological and psychological precedence given to

¹⁴What the 'natural love of God' would be is an interesting question. It could not be 'love' in a sense coinciding with the meaning of charity. See Appendix 1 & 4

¹⁵See *Quodl.* IV, 18

¹⁶See Pinckaers, S., O.P., ed., *Les Actes humaines* in *Somme théologique*, Ed. du Cerf, Paris, 1966, XII, Appendix II, 215–76

¹⁷See 1a2ae. 107, 1 ad 2

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the good by St Thomas, Thomas Gilby has designated the objectives of the moral act as 'the-good-as-meant' and the 'lack-of-good-as-meant'.¹⁸ Unless a person means the good, he does not do it; unless he can mean the good, his act cannot lack the good as meant. The good as meant, *par excellence*, is the objective of charity: the divine good, God himself loved for himself and above all. And charity itself is the supreme case of meaning the good—'no virtue has so great a leaning towards its own act nor acts with so much delight as does charity'.¹⁹ It is love—'a kind of spiritual union by which the will is in a way transformed into the end loved, which comes about by charity'.²⁰ Because charity is this, then there can be appeal to high ideals and there can be a description of the mystery of iniquity in life or death terms. The high purposes and challenges of the Christian life appeal connaturally to one who loves God. The kind of moral ideal that matches the measure of charity is one of interiority and sensitivity to the good. The same sensitivity and responsiveness can be presupposed as the one true criterion of sin and the only effective deterrent to sin; because a person can love the good as meant, he can also appreciate the seriousness of sin as separating him from the God he loves. He can, because of the charity diffused in his heart, feel that separation from God is the supreme evil, the supreme punishment that can befall him. A realism with regard to the affective transformation worked by charity underlies the noble vision of the moral life that St Thomas reveals in its simplest lines. In complete harmony with that vision is his metaphysical affirmation of the good as prior to evil, and his anthropological affirmation that man connaturally is bent towards the good of his being. Sin cannot destroy that.²¹ Neither can sin triumph over a person who seeks to live by charity. Such a theology is addressed to those who can live by charity, who by charity can mean the good, because the love of God is given to them; it presupposes that there are men of good will. It is not a theology for brow-beaters and martinets; perhaps that is why it did not catch on. Nor is it a theology for doom-sayers. Even its consideration of sin and punishment rings with the same confident spirit as these words of St Paul: *For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities . . . nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.*²²

¹⁸Vol. 18, Appendix 10¹⁹2a2ae. 23, 2²⁰1a2ae. 62, 3²¹See 1a2ae. 85, 1 & 2²²Romans 8, 38–39