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978-0-521-02945-2 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 37 - Justice, (2a2ae. 57-62)

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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ST THOMAS AQUINAS
SUMMA
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Latin text and English translation,
Introductions, Notes, Appendices
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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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TEXT AND TRANSLATION

THE DIFFERENCES between the Piana and Leonine editions are of little importance, though a few are noted in the present volume which almost always adopts the Leonine reading. The punctuation has been tidied and some passages re-paragraphed for the sake of clearness. The translation matches the original in the order of the sentences.

FOOTNOTES

Those signified by a superior number are the references given by St Thomas, with the exception of no. 1, which refers to parallel texts in his writing. 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). Titles of St Thomas's works are abbreviated as follows:

Summa Theologiæ, without title. Part, question, article, reply; e.g. 1a. 70, 1 ad 2. 2a2æ. 25, 4.

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

Scriptum in IV Libros Sententiarum, Sent. Book, distinction, question, article, solution, or *quæstiuncula*, reply; e.g. 11 Sent. 15, 1, 1, ii ad 3.

Compendium Theologiæ, *Compend. theol.*

Scriptural commentaries (*lecturæ, expositiones, reportatæ*): 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 1 Cor.* Chapter, verse, *lectio* as required.

Philosophical commentaries: Aristotle, *Peri Hermeneias*, *In Periherm.*; Posterior Analytics, *In Post. Anal.*; Physics, *In Phys.*; *De Cælo et Mundo*, *In de Cæl.*; *De Generatione et Corruptione*, *In de Gen. et Corr.*; *De Anima*, *In de Anima*; Metaphysics, *In Meta.*; Nichomachean Ethics, *In Ethic.*; Politics, *In Pol.* Book, chapter, *lectio* as required, also for references to Dionysius, *De Divinis Nominibus*, *In de Div. Nom.* References to Aristotle include the Bekker numbering.

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Quæstiones quodlibetæ, Quodl.

Main titles are given for other works.

K=P. Krüger, editor of the *Corpus Juris Civilis*, Berlin. Vol. I, 15th ed. 1928. Vol. II, 9th ed. 1915.

RF=E. Richter & E. Friedberg, editors of the *Corpus Juris Canonici*. 2 vols. Leipzig, 1922.

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INTRODUCTION

THOUGH CONVENTIONALLY regarded as devoted to moral theology, the *Secunda Pars* of the *Summa* surveys in fact a wider and deeper scene: the *Prima Secundæ* takes in human happiness, the psychology of human activity, passion, and habituation, original sin, and the mystery of grace, all of which are subjects where the interest is not mainly ethical, while the *Secunda Secundæ*, where the living of the good life is studied in detail, treats directly of morals, in St Thomas's strict sense of the term, only in the middle section, QQ 47-170. True this composes the bulk of the *Secunda Secundæ*, which then, not inappropriately, may be called a moral theology. Yet in his view moral theory provides a frame of reference within the larger field of man's need for happiness and of his responses to God who is present everywhere in the world and reveals himself to faith in Christ, while moral practice springs from desires which are pre-moral and flows to ends which are post-moral. Whether conceived philosophically or theologically, morality occupies an area where man adjusts himself by deliberation and choice to the business of living according to right reason; its end and object is the attainment of human good.¹ However there is a fuller though more mysterious living through sharing in God's own life. Here is a higher end and object, namely the divine good, which is beyond the reach of the moral virtues, though not of the theological virtues and the Gifts of the Spirit.² These are studied in the first main section of the *Secunda Secundæ*, QQ 1-46, which, therefore, goes outside the confines of morality; to a lesser extent the same may be said of the third and final main section, QQ 171-89, which considers the charisms of the Spirit and contemplation.

For all its complexity and systematic application of distinctions in order to isolate the point under discussion, the *Summa* is a single whole of which no part can be properly appreciated apart from the total theology. All are unified in a discourse which proceeds from the principles of Christian Revelation and uses throughout a consistent and common philosophy.³ It is centred on God, but confessedly it is thought and talk about God, and so there is no objection to calling it anthropological theology, or even, when it extends to human affairs, theological anthropology.⁴ Such is the

¹cf Vol. 18 of this series, ed. T. Gilby, Appendices 3, *Placing Moral Good*; 5, *The Subordination of Morals*; 6, *Philosophical and Theological Morals*; 7, *Morals and Religion*

²1a2æ. 62, 1 & 2; 68, 1, 2, & 8. 2a2æ. 81, 5

³Vol. 1 of this series, ed. T. Gilby, Appendix 4, *Temper of the Summa*

⁴cf 1a. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 & 8

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continuity of St Thomas's thought that it is impossible to draw a line where one ends and the other begins. He certainly did not count *bonum divinum* and *bonum humanum* as alternatives, and when he is treating of the latter, as in the present volume, it is more than that which might be proposed by a purely humanist moral philosophy. The Aristotle he discovered with relish did not fly to his head; he was grateful to be given a ground-work and a scientific and dialectical method for reasonable discussion, and he shared Aristotle's spirit of respect for material causes and of confidence in the power of human intelligence in the world,⁵ yet the moral virtues of the *Summa* are not simply those of the *Nicomachean Ethics* tintured with Christianity; taken up into the new life of grace, they are charged with a difference in kind.⁶

Into the vexed question of the relation of supernatural moral virtue, *virtus infusa*, to natural moral virtue, *virtus acquisita*, we cannot now enter: enough to note that it is as close as that of psychology to physiology, or, better, of human psychology to animal psychology, so much so that the higher cannot be studied without looking into the conditions of the lower. St Thomas did not shirk a task congenial to his Aristotelean temper; indeed a newcomer to the *Summa* may catch himself wondering if for laborious stretches it is about theology at all. Admittedly the space given a topic is too often disproportionate to its theological importance. Yet even then the surrounding truths of Revelation are not forgotten, and they keep breaking in, sometimes on unlikely occasions. So it is with the discussions on the moral virtues, of which those on justice form more than half.

The theological character of the treatise will be more explicit in the later stages, especially when dealing with religion, or the due worship of God. Here in the opening stages the concern is to lay the material foundations. It begins from the idea of right, *jus*, of an ordered balance in things which is a premise for morality and law to develop. The appeal to a pre-judicial and biological conception of a natural right matching male and female should be noticed.⁷ The *aequalitas* which makes things even becomes the matter of justice when our responsibility is involved in our outward dealings with one another. The lasting and constant will to render to each his due, that definition from Roman jurisprudence starts the discussion on justice.⁸ It is taken as a specific cardinal virtue; the meaning is narrower than that of Scriptural 'righteousness', Vulgate *justitia*,⁹ and no more lies at the heart of the Gospel than does that of legality.¹⁰

The due of justice lies in an objective measure decided by the situation

⁵Vol. 1, ed. T. Gilby, Appendix 6, *Theology as Science*

⁶1a2ae. 63, 4

⁷2a2ae. 57, 3

⁸2a2ae. 58, 1

⁹2a2ae. 58, 2

¹⁰cf 1a. 21, 4. 1a2ae. 106, 1 & 2

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outside us rather than by our own psychological dispositions and attitudes.¹¹ It is paid by what we do rather than by how we feel, as by the first son in the parable sent by his father to work in the vineyard; 'I will not,' he answered, but afterwards thought better and went, while the other son answered, 'Certainly, sir,' and did not go.¹² The measure, then, is impersonal in a sense, yet it is not so fixed and rigid as not to match diverse social situations; justice is an analogical value pitched at various levels according as it renders what is due for the common good of the political community (*justitia generalis*), to one private person from another (*justitia commutativa*), and to one person from the political group (*justitia distributiva*).¹³ This threefold division was adequate when the *Summa* was written, before the Welfare-State was envisaged, though nowadays it may seem insufficient if distributive justice is restricted to the apportionment of social amenities, burdens, and penalties. The main theme of the treatise, however, is interpersonal justice, to which those holding office also are bound, and accordingly commutative justice strikes the dominant note.

Justinian's Roman Law had been recovered in the 12th century, and was a major influence in shaping the social and political institutions of the West, secular and ecclesiastical. St Thomas worked in the centre of a powerful movement of legalism and was well-versed in its apparatus, so that it comes as a surprise how he relegates juridical authorities to a minor place, even in this treatise of right and justice. His preference was to go to Greek philosophy when he can, but even then, as has been indicated, the sovereign authority is the word of God declared through the Scriptures and the Church, seemingly remote from his speech sometimes, but not from his thought.

¹¹2a2ae. 58, 10¹²Matthew 31, 28¹³2a2ae. 58, 5 & 7; 61, 1