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978-0-521-02953-7 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 45 - Prophecy and other
Charisms, (2a2ae. 171-178)
Roland Potter 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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NIHIL OBSTAT

THOMAS GILBY O.P.
GERARDUS MEATH O.P.

IMPRIMI POTEST

JOANNES HISLOP O.P.
Prior Provincialis Angliæ
die 26 Septembris 1969

NIHIL OBSTAT

ANDREW J. MOORE J.C.L.
Censor

IMPRIMATUR

✠ PATRICK CASEY
Vic. Gen.
Westminster, 3 November 1969

Cambridge University Press

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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, expresses 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 communicates his particular Apostolic Blessing.

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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/9780521393928

© The Dominican Council as Trustee for the English Province of the Order of Preachers 1970
[Excepting Latin text of 'CIRCA GRATIAS GRATIS DATAS']

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This digitally printed first paperback version 2006

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

ISBN-13 978-0-521-39392-8 hardback
ISBN-10 0-521-39392-2 hardback

ISBN-13 978-0-521-02953-7 paperback
ISBN-10 0-521-02953-8 paperback

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EDITORIAL NOTES

THE TEXT AND TRANSLATION

THE TRANSLATION, which matches the order of sentences in the original, was made from the Leonine text, which, somewhat reparagraphed and repunctuated, is followed in the main by this volume: the few variations are shown. Scriptural references are to the Vulgate.

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 II, 14.

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 Theologiae, *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 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, 1, also for

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references to Dionysius, *De divinis Nominibus*, *In de Div. Nom.* References to Aristotle include the Bekker numbering.

Quæstiones quodlibetæ, *Quodl.*

Complete titles are given for other works.

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INTRODUCTION

THE root principle of all that is treated in the following Questions is God's free gift, just as the root principle of all true mysticism is God's free gift. He intervenes in men's souls by redeeming and by granting the fruits of redemption, which are sanctification leading to eternal unity with him. In a progressively egalitarian society it becomes more difficult to realize that God favours some more than others, and that these differences are all to the glory of God and to the detriment of no man at all.

St Thomas, with all Catholic tradition, assumes that some men are more favoured by God. In particular these have received special 'charisms'—which is going to be our rendering of the rather tautological Latin of the medievals, i.e. *gratiæ gratis datæ*. He then proceeds to investigate these special graces from an intellectualist standpoint. In this he is a child of his age by giving speculative knowledge pride of place. For him the rôle of a prophet is a sublime act of knowledge, receiving from God truths above all human capacities and transmitting these to men. Modern scholars and theologians would stress that, for a Semite, knowing is an activity of the whole being; and that in the Bible hearing is more important than seeing.

Certainly if St Thomas were alive today, he would make the needful adaptations and embody the valid findings in Semitic studies. But it could be argued that he himself was aware of the limitations of prophecy as a bare communication of truth. Tongues, speech and miracles all have a part to play—yet that part is always the conveyance of truth in what might be called the more medieval sense. Another and earlier section of the *Summa* (1a2æ. 98–105, The Old Law, Vol. 29 of this series, together with its lead-in discussions to the New Law of the Gospel) corresponds more fully to the modern desire for straight Biblical Theology. In this section on Prophecy, we let St Thomas speak for himself in his own way.