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(3a. 7-15)

Liam G. Walsh O.P.

Excerpt

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THE GRACE OF CHRIST

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SUMMA THEOLOGICÆ, 3a.

de coassumptis a Filio Dei

Deinde considerandum est de coassumptis a Filio Dei in humana natura:

et primo, de his quæ pertinent ad perfectionem;
secundo, de his quæ pertinent ad defectum.

Circa primum consideranda sunt tria:

primo, de gratia Christi;
secundo, de scientia ejus;
tertio, de potentia ipsius.

De gratia autem Christi considerandum est dupliciter:

primo quidem, de gratia ejus secundum quod est singularis homo;
secundo, de gratia ejus secundum quod est caput Ecclesiæ.
(Nam de gratia unionis jam dictum est.)^a

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THE HUMAN CONDITION OF THE SON OF GOD

the human condition of the Son of God

Now we must consider the human condition undertaken by the Son of God:

- firstly, there are his perfections (7-13);
- secondly, there are his disabilities (14-15).

Under the first heading we must enquire about three matters:

- first, about the grace of Christ (7-8);
- second, about his knowledge (9-12);
- third, about his power (13).

The grace of Christ has to be examined from two points of view:

- firstly, his grace as an individual man (7);
 - secondly, his grace as head of the Church (8).
- (We have already discussed his grace of hypostatic union.)^a

^acf Introduction.

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SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, 3a. 7, I

Quaestio 7. de gratia Christi secundum quod est singularis homo

Circa primum quaeruntur tredecim:

1. utrum in anima Christi sit aliqua gratia habitualis;
2. utrum in Christo fuerint virtutes;
3. utrum in eo fuerit fides;
4. utrum fuerit in eo spes;
5. utrum in Christo fuerint dona;
6. utrum in Christo fuerit timoris donum;
7. utrum in Christo fuerint gratiae gratis datae;
8. utrum in Christo fuerit prophetia;
9. utrum in eo fuerit plenitudo gratiae;
10. utrum talis plenitudo sit propria Christi;
11. utrum Christi gratia sit infinita;
12. utrum potuerit augeri;
13. qualiter haec gratia se habeat ad unionem.

articulus 1. utrum in anima Christi sit aliqua gratia habitualis

AD PRIMUM sic proceditur:¹ 1. Videtur quod in anima assumpta a Verbo non fuerit gratia habitualis. Gratia enim est quaedam participatio divinitatis in creatura rationali, secundum illud II *Pet.*, *Per quem maxima et pretiosa promissa nobis donavit, ut divinae simus consortes naturae.*² Christus autem est Deus non participative, sed secundum veritatem. Ergo in eo non fuit gratia habitualis.

2. Praeterea, gratia ad hoc est necessaria homini ut per eam bene operetur, secundum illud I *Cor.*, *Abundantius omnibus laboravi: non ego autem, sed gratia Dei mecum;*³ et etiam ad hoc quod homo consequatur vitam aeternam, secundum illud *Rom.*, *Gratia Dei vita aeterna.*⁴ Sed Christo, ex hoc solo quod erat naturalis Filius Dei, debebatur hereditas vitae aeternae. Ex hoc etiam quod erat Verbum, per quod, *facta sunt omnia,*⁵ aderat ei facultas omnia bona operandi. Non igitur secundum humanam naturam indigebat alia gratia nisi unione ad Verbum.

3. Praeterea, illud quod operatur per modum instrumenti, non indiget habitu ad proprias operationes, sed habitus fundatur in principali agente.

¹cf III *Sent.* 13, 1, 1. *De Veritate* 229, 1. *Compend. Theol.* 213, 214. *In Joan.* 3, lect. 6

²II *Peter* 1, 4

³I *Corinthians* 15, 10

⁴*Romans* 6, 23

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THE GRACE OF CHRIST AS AN INDIVIDUAL

Question 7. the grace of Christ as an individual man

Here there are thirteen points of enquiry:

1. did Christ have any habitual grace?
2. did he have virtues?
3. did he have faith?
4. did he have hope?
5. did he have the gifts of the Holy Spirit?
6. did he have the gift of fear?
7. did he have the charisms?
8. did he have the charism of prophecy?
9. did he have the fulness of grace?
10. is the fulness of grace found only in Christ?
11. was the grace of Christ infinite?
12. could his grace increase?
13. how does this grace stand in relation to the hypostatic union?

article 1. was there any habitual grace in the soul of Christ?

THE FIRST POINT:¹ 1. It would seem there was no habitual grace in the soul which the Word took to himself. Grace is a kind of sharing in divinity given to thinking creatures. This is stated in II *Peter*, *He has granted to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may become partakers of the divine nature.*² But Christ does not merely share in divinity, he is God in the full sense of the term. Hence he did not have habitual grace.

2. Moreover, it is in order to act well that man requires grace. So we are told in I *Corinthians*, *I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God which is with me.*³ He also needs grace in order to gain eternal life. This point is made in *Romans*, *The free gift of God is eternal life.*⁴ But Christ was entitled to inherit eternal life by the very fact that he was the natural Son of God. And because he was the Word, through whom *all things were made*,⁵ he was able to do everything well. So he did not require any grace in his human nature other than its union with the Word.

3. Moreover, anything which serves merely as an instrument can carry on its own particular activity without the benefit of a habit; habits belong to principal agents. Now, as Damascene says, the human nature of Christ

⁵*John* 1, 3

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SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, 3a. 7, 1

Humana autem natura in Christo fuit sicut *instrumentum deitatis*, ut dicit Damascenus.⁶ Ergo in Christo non debuit esse aliqua gratia habitualis.

SED CONTRA est quod dicitur *Isaia, Requiescet super eum Spiritus Domini*,⁷ qui quidem esse in homine dicitur per gratiam habitualementem, ut in *Prima Parte* dictum est.⁸ Ergo in Christo fuit gratia habitualis.

RESPONSIO: Dicendum quod necesse est ponere in Christo gratiam habitualementem, propter tria. Primo quidem, propter unionem animae illius ad Verbum Dei. Quanto enim aliquod receptivum propinquius est causae influenti, tanto magis participat de influentia ipsius. Influxus autem gratiae est a Deo: secundum illud *Psalmi, Gratiam et gloriam dabit Dominus*.⁹ Et ideo maxime fuit conveniens ut anima illa reciperet influxum divinae gratiae.

Secundo, propter nobilitatem illius animae, cujus operationes oportebat propinquissime attingere ad Deum per cognitionem et amorem. Ad quod necesse est elevari humanam* naturam per gratiam.

Tertio, propter habitudinem ipsius Christi ad genus humanum. Christus enim, in quantum homo, est *mediator Dei et hominum*, ut dicitur *I Tim.*¹⁰ Et ideo oportebat quod haberet gratiam etiam in alios redundantem: secundum illud *Joan., De plenitudine ejus omnes accepimus, gratiam pro gratia*.¹¹

*Piana has *rationalem* for *humanam*

⁶*De Fide Orthodoxa* III, 15. PG 94, 1049 and 1060

⁷*Isaiah* 11, 2

⁸*Ia.* 43, 3

⁹*Psalms* 83, 12 (Douay)

¹⁰*I Timothy* 2, 5

¹¹*John* 1, 16

⁶Habitual grace is a created quality which enables man to share in the inner life of God by personal acts of knowing and loving. In giving it, God exploits the capacity of man (*potentia obedientialis*) to be raised to divine life without the destruction of his natural integrity. By distinguishing this created gift from the presence of the uncreated Spirit of God (in his theology of charity, 2a2ae. 23, 2; and of grace 1a2ae. 110, 1) St Thomas had made it possible for Christian anthropology to maintain the dignity and integrity of man in the work of his own salvation. It is this anthropology that he is here applying to Christ, as he must do if he is to be loyal to his belief that Christ is truly man. The objections he sets against his thesis are really failures of nerve in face of the consequences of the Incarnation; they sell the pass to Monophysitism.

The three arguments offered by St Thomas in favour of his thesis are theological explanations rather than proofs. Assuming, on the basis of various scriptural texts, that Christ has grace, he applies his own analysis of what grace is to make this fact intelligible and to relate it to other aspects of the mystery of Christ (the hypostatic union, the integrity of Christ's humanity, and the redemptive purpose of the Incarnation). The second argument is the decisive one because it embodies his option on the formal effect of grace. The first argument shows how the appropriate efficient cause is present in Christ to produce this formal effect; and the third argument shows that an appropriate finality is served by producing it.

⁶This principle of causality originates in the material order, where nearness is

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was like *an instrument of the divinity*.⁶ Hence, there is no place for habitual grace in Christ.

ON THE OTHER HAND there is a text of *Isaiah*, *The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him*.⁷ It is through habitual grace that the Spirit is said to dwell in a man, as was stated in the *Prima Pars*.⁸ Hence there was habitual grace in Christ.

REPLY: One must postulate habitual grace in Christ.^a And this for three reasons. Firstly, because of the way his particular soul was joined to the Word of God. The closer anything draws to a cause which is acting upon it the more will it be affected by it.^b Now the outpouring of grace comes from God, according to the verse, *The Lord will give grace and glory*.⁹ Hence it was entirely fitting that the soul of Christ should be affected by divine grace.

Secondly, because of the dignity of Christ's soul. He had to know and love God in the most intimate possible way. For activity of this sort a human nature has to be raised above itself by grace.

Thirdly, there was the position which Christ held in the human race. Christ as man is, in the words of 1 *Timothy*, *mediator of God and men*.¹⁰ Therefore, he must have had grace to such an extent that it would overflow to others. Which is what is said by *John*, *And from his fulness have we all received, grace upon grace*.¹¹

normally a measure of effectiveness. It is transferred to the ontological order, where the grades of participated being, with the causal relationship between them, are frequently described by St Thomas in terms of nearness (e.g. 1a. 2, 3, *quarta via*; *De Potentia* III, 5). Nearness in being is a measure of effectiveness in causality. St Thomas is here arguing that the ontological nearness of the humanity of Christ to the divinity, due to the hypostatic union, ensures it a created participation in divinity, which is grace. However, this argument does not establish the necessity of grace in Christ but merely that it is fitting, *conveniens*. It is as an efficient cause that the divinity perfects the humanity of Christ, *divinitas perficit eum efficienter, non formaliter* (III Sent. 13, 1, 1; cf *ibid* ad 3). And as an efficient cause God remains sovereignly free, even in relation to the humanity of Christ (cf 3a. 50, 2 ad 3). In fact, we are dealing here with a theological argument, which is less concerned with proving the grace of Christ than with making the presence of that grace, taken as already known by revelation, technically intelligible. The argument needs to be set within the total movement of the doctrine of Incarnation in 3a. Pars, as expressed, for example in the text, *In mysterio Incarnationis magis consideratur descensus divinae plenitudinis in naturam humanam, quam profectus humane naturae, quasi praexistentis, in Deum. Et ideo in homine Christo a principio fuit perfecta spiritualitas*. (3a. 14, 1 ad 2). The only limiting factor in the perfection of Christ is the kenosis required for redemption. And lack of grace in Christ would not serve in any way the cause of redemption, as the second and third arguments of this article make clear.

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SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, 3a. 7, 2

1. Ad primum ergo dicendum quod Christus est verus Deus secundum personam et naturam divinam. Sed quia cum unitate personae remanet distinctio naturarum, ut ex supra dictis patet,¹² anima Christi non est per suam essentiam divina. Unde oportet quod fiat divina per participationem, quae est secundum gratiam.

2. Ad secundum dicens quod Christo, secundum quod est naturalis Filius Dei, debetur hereditas aeterna, quae est ipsa beatitudo increata, per increatum actum cognitionis et amoris Dei, eundem scilicet quo Pater cognoscit et amat seipsum. Cujus actus anima capax non erat propter differentiam naturae. Unde oportebat quod attingeret ad Deum per actum fruitionis creatum. Qui quidem esse non potest nisi per gratiam.

Similiter etiam, in quantum est Verbum Dei, habuit facultatem omnia bene operandi operatione divina. Sed quia, praeter operationem divinam oportet ponere operationem humanam, ut infra patebit,¹³ oportuit in eo esse habitualement gratiam, per quam hujusmodi operatio in eo esset perfecta.

3. Ad tertium dicendum quod humanitas Christi est instrumentum divinitatis, non quidem sicut instrumentum inanimatum, quod nullo modo agit sed solum agitur, sed tamquam instrumentum animatum anima rationali, quod ita agit quod etiam agitur. Et ideo, ad convenientiam actionis, oportuit eum habere gratiam habitualement.

articulus 2. utrum in Christo fuerint virtutes

AD SECUNDUM sic proceditur:¹ 1. Videtur quod in Christo non fuerint virtutes. Christus enim habuit abundantiam gratiae. Sed gratia sufficit ad omnia recte agendum, secundum illud II Cor., *Sufficit tibi gratia mea.*² Ergo in Christo non fuerunt virtutes.

2. Praeterea, secundum Philosophum virtus dividitur contra *quendam heroicum sive divinum habitum*,³ qui attribuitur hominibus divinis. Hoc autem maxime convenit Christo. Ergo Christus non habuit virtutes, sed aliquid altius virtute.

3. Praeterea, sicut in *Secunda Parte* dictum est,⁴ virtutes omnes simul habentur. Sed Christo non fuit conveniens habere simul omnes virtutes: sicut patet de liberalitate et magnificentia, quae habent actum suum circa divitias, quas Christus contempsit, secundum illud *Matt., Filius Hominis*

¹²3a. 2¹cf III Sent. 13, 1, 1; 2, 1³*Ethics* VII, 1. 1145a19^cThis right is vested in his person, and exercised through his natures, both human and divine.^dThis adage, much favoured by the Greek Fathers, expresses the subordination of the human to the divine in Christ and at the same time the divine value and¹³3a. 19, 1²II *Corinthians* 12, 9⁴1a2æ. 65, 1 and 2

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Hence: 1. Christ is truly God, both in his person and in his divine nature. But because the natures remain distinct within the oneness of person, as is clear from what has been said already,¹² the soul of Christ is not intrinsically divine. It has, then, to be made divine by the kind of sharing that comes with grace.

2. Christ is, indeed, entitled to the eternal inheritance, being the natural Son of God.⁹ This inheritance, which is uncreated happiness, is enjoyed by an uncreated act of knowing and loving God—the same act by which the Father knows and loves himself. The soul of Christ could not bear such activity, being of a different nature. Hence the soul had to reach God by a created act of bliss, such as can come only from grace.

In the same way Christ, as the Word of God, was able to do all things well by calling his divinity into play. But one must maintain, for reasons that will become clear later on,¹³ that there is a human as well as a divine activity in Christ. And it was to perfect this that he had to have habitual grace.

3. The humanity of Christ is an instrument of the divinity.^d But it is not an inert instrument, such as would merely be moved without in any way moving itself. It is a living instrument, with a spiritual soul, which itself acts even when it is being acted upon. To act accordingly, then, Christ needed habitual grace.

article 2. did Christ have virtues?

THE SECOND POINT:¹ 1. It would seem that Christ did not have virtues. Christ had ample grace. But grace is all that is required for behaving properly, as is clear from II *Corinthians*, *My grace is sufficient for you.*² So, Christ did not have virtues.

2. Again, Aristotle holds that virtue is to be contrasted with a *kind of heroic or divine attitude*,³ which is to be found in men of divine stature. This is supremely true of Christ. Hence, he did not have the virtues, but something higher than virtue.

3. Again, the virtues are all of one piece, as was explained in the *Secunda Pars*.⁴ But it does not seem right for Christ to have had all the virtues at once. Generosity and grandeur are meant to cope with wealth, whereas Christ cut himself off entirely from riches, as we read in *Matthew*, *The*

significance of Christ's human actions. However, if taken too literally it could obscure the reality and autonomy of Christ as man, and introduce a kind of mono-physitism. The doctrine of the presence of human grace in Christ is a safeguard against this tendency. St Thomas wants to show that the humanity is a unique kind of instrument. cf vol. 50 of this series, ed. C. E. O'Neill, Appendix 3.

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*non habet ubi caput suum reclinet.*⁵ Temperantia etiam et continentia sunt circa concupiscentias pravas, quæ in Christo non fuerunt. Ergo Christus non habuit virtutes.

SED CONTRA est quod super illud *Psalmi*, *Sed in lege Domini voluntas ejus*,⁶ dicit glossa, *Hic ostenditur Christus plenus omni bono.*⁷ Sed *bona qualitas mentis* est virtus.⁸ Ergo Christus fuit plenus omni virtute.

RESPONSIO: Dicendum quod, sicut in *Secunda Parte* habitum est,⁹ sicut gratia respicit essentiam animæ, ita virtus respicit ejus potentiam. Unde oportet quod, sicut potentiæ animæ derivantur ab ejus essentia, ita virtutes sunt quædam derivationes gratiæ. Quanto autem aliquod principium est perfectius, tanto magis imprimat suos effectus. Unde, cum gratia Christi fuerit perfectissima, consequens est quod ex ipsa processerint virtutes ad perficiendum singulas potentias animæ, quantum ad omnes animæ actus. Et ita Christus habuit omnes virtutes.

1. Ad primum ergo dicendum quod gratia sufficit homini quantum ad omnia quibus ordinatur ad beatitudinem. Horum tamen quædam perficit gratia immediate per seipsam, sicut gratum facere Deo, et alia hujusmodi; quædam autem mediantibus virtutibus, quæ ex gratia procedunt.

2. Ad secundum dicendum quod habitus ille heroicus vel divinus non differt a virtute communiter dicta nisi secundum perfectiorem modum, in quantum scilicet aliquis est dispositus ad bonum quodam altiori modo quam communiter omnibus competat. Unde per hoc non ostenditur quod Christus non habuit virtutes, sed quod habuit eas perfectissime, ultra communem modum. Sicut etiam Plotinus posuit quendam sublimem modum virtutum, quas esse dixit *purgati animi*.¹⁰

3. Ad tertium dicendum quod liberalitas et magnificentia commendatur circa divitias in quantum aliquis non tantum appetitur divitias quod velit eas retinere prætermittendo id quod fieri oportet. Ille autem minime divitias appetitur quo penitus eas contemnit et abjicit propter perfectionis

⁵Matthew 8, 20⁶Psalms 1, 2⁷Glossa Lombardi. PL 191, 62⁸Peter Lombard, II *Sent.* 27⁹Iazæ. 110, 4¹⁰cf Macrobius, *In Somnum Scipionis* 1, 8. Iazæ. 61, 5

^aUnderlying this article is St Thomas's teaching on the structure of human personality. The soul, as substantial form of the body, is the radical principle of all man's operations. However, it sustains these operations, not immediately, but through the various faculties that emanate from it, and are distinguished from it as accidents from substance. It is provided with as many faculties as are necessary to cope with the objective aspects of reality that man has to deal with in order to reach his perfection. On the supernatural plane grace perfects the essence of the soul, virtues