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978-0-521-02957-5 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 49 - The Grace of Christ,
(3a. 7-15)

Liam G. Walsh 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

THEOLOGIAE

Latin text and English translation,
Introductions, Notes, Appendices
and Glossaries



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PIÆ MEMORIÆ
JOANNIS
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DICATUM

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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.

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TO
MY PARENTS

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EDITORIAL NOTES

TITLE

THE VOLUME has been named from the first of the nine questions presented in it. Although dominated by this question on the Grace of Christ the treatise is, in fact, a comprehensive analysis of the human condition assumed by the Incarnate Word (cf Introduction).

TEXT AND TRANSLATION

The text is substantially that of the Leonine, checked with that of the Piana. Most of the variations are petty and the few of any consequence at all have been indicated. The paragraphing of previous printed editions has been rearranged on occasions to make the argument clearer, and the punctuation has been tidied up. The translation aims to be an accurate, idiomatic rendering of the thought of St Thomas. It assumes that for technicalities and the niceties of terminology the reader will be consulting the Latin original on the facing page.

St Thomas used a Vulgate text of the Bible, although not always word for word. The translation of his biblical texts is from the Revised Standard Version; but where his argument depends on a peculiarity of the Vulgate the Douay translation is used and noted.

FOOTNOTES

Those marked by asterisks give textual variants. Those signified by a superior number are the references given by St Thomas, with the exception of no. 1 to each article which usually refers to parallel texts in his writings. Those signified alphabetically are editorial references and explanatory remarks.

REFERENCES

Biblical references are to the Vulgate. Where the reference does not correspond in the Revised Standard Version the discrepancy is noted. Patristic references are to Migne (PG, Greek Fathers; PL Latin Fathers). Abbreviations to St Thomas's works are as follows:

Summa Theologiae, without title. Part, question, article, reply; e.g. 1a. 3, 2 ad 3. 1a2æ. 17, 6. 2a2æ. 180, 10. 3a. 35, 8.

Summa Contra Gentiles, CG. Book, chapter; e.g. CG 1, 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.

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Compendium Theologiæ, Compend. Theol.

Commentaries of Scripture (*lecturæ, expositiones*): Job, *In Job*; Psalms, *In Psalm.*; 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 Cælo et Mundo*, *In De Cæl.*; *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 Boëthius, *Liber de Hebdomadibus* and *Liber de Trinitate*, *In De hebd.* and *In De Trin.*, and on Dionysius *De Divinis Nominibus*, *In De div. nom.*; *Quæstiones quodlibetales (de quolibet)*, *Quodl.*

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

References to Aristotle are given the Bekker notation; also, as with those to Dionysius, the *lectio* number in St Thomas's exposition.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I gladly record my gratitude to the general editor of this series for his encouragement and assistance; to my Dominican brethren at Tallaght for their advice and help with proof-reading; and to the sisters at St Catherine's Centre, London, for their hospitality and support while I was at work on this volume.

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INTRODUCTION

Situating the treatise

In the *Tertia Pars* of the *Summa* St Thomas is discussing the ultimate historical gift by which God brings all that he makes back to himself in man. In the *Prima Pars* and the *Secunda Pars* he has been analysing, in abstract universal terms, the nature of God and the nature of man, and the kind of relationship that is possible between them; and he has been using these ideas to understand how this relationship was actually worked out in the preliminary phases of salvation history. When he comes in the *Tertia Pars* to look at the final phase of man's history, stretching from the first to the second coming of Christ, he applies the principles and historical precedents that he has already established to Christ, the Church and Christian destiny. His theology reaches its most concrete and existential level, as his thinking becomes dominated by the facts witnessed to by the Gospel and the tradition of Church belief and practice. At the same time the *Tertia Pars* is profoundly speculative, because it calls into play and synthesizes the theological, metaphysical, anthropological and ethical principles that have been elaborated earlier in the *Summa*. Without an appreciation of these principles, and an ability to detect their influence—for they are often left unstated—one may find a lot of what St Thomas has to say about Christ banal or trifling. If one treats the *Tertia Pars* as a compendium of Christology one will find that it has little to offer. Conversely, the thinking of the first two parts finds its validity tested and its analogical elasticity stretched to the limits in the third. If the basic theology and anthropology of St Thomas does not make sense when applied to the mystery of Christ it will carry very little credibility, at least for a Christian. There is a question mark after the First and Second Parts of the *Summa* until the Third Part has been read.

It starts from the fact that, for the faith of the Church, the one Jesus is both God and man. To explain what this means St Thomas deploys theological principles about the personal life of God and the gift he makes of himself to man, anthropological principles about man who, because he is made in the image of God, has a capacity for returning to the God from whom he came, and economic principles about man's fallen state and his need of redeeming grace. Having looked at the union itself he devotes a series of Questions (4–15) to the humanity of Christ. He begins with a study of the essential features of the human nature assumed by the Word, the *natura assumpta*. Then, under the heading *co-assumpta in humana natura* he presents the material of this present volume (Questions 7–15). The *co-assumpta* are the distinctive qualities that make up the individual

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human condition of Christ. Technically they are accidents modifying the substantial being which the Word has in his human nature—grace pervading his soul and its faculties, knowledge in his intellect, power in his will, and various disabilities experienced in his body and soul. They are contingent features of the human condition, freely undertaken by the Word; they are the existential shape in which he expresses his essential humanity. The Word could have taken on human nature without them; no binding logic requires them. They are distinguished by St Thomas from the *consequentia unionis*, the necessary logical deductions from the facts of the incarnation, which he goes on to explore in Questions 16–26.¹

Method

His method is suited to his material. Since the *co-assumpta* are contingent facts he must at each stage establish the facts: did Christ have grace, was he head of the Church, did he have different kinds of knowledge, was he omnipotent, did he sin, did he feel pain? The facts can only be established from the evidence we have about Christ, from the Scriptures as they have been interpreted in Christian tradition. Where there is clear scriptural evidence the facts are incontrovertible. Where the tradition is being appealed to the evidence is much less decisive. The *co-assumpta* are freely chosen features of Christ's human existence, and the Incarnation is conceivable without them. They have never been the subject of direct dogmatic definition by the Church and theology has been allowed a good deal of freedom to list and interpret them in different ways. Hence the appeal to tradition is much less authoritative in this section of the *Summa* than it was in the section dealing with the hypostatic union.

The process of establishing the fact about Christ is already an interpretation of the facts. Exegesis is hermeneutical. Methodologically, however, interpretation is the work of theology rather than exegesis. In the present case it is an attempt to understand the facts about Christ's human condition in the light of a particular theological anthropology. One has to have a certain view of what it is to be a man in order to understand the human features of Christ. Hence one expects St Thomas to bring his main anthropological principles into play in this section. He will be presenting his interpretation of Christ in terms of the general view of man that he has worked out in Part One and the moral profile of man that he has drawn in Part Two.

Scripture

The scriptural material is much more abundant in this section of the *Summa* than in the corresponding section of the *Commentary on the*

¹Vol. 50 of this series, ed. C. E. O'Neill.

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Sentences. The texts, too often treated by readers of St Thomas as if they were a garnishing scattered like sprigs of parsley over the theological dish, belong in fact to the very substance of the argument. They are generally well chosen, and evoke the major themes of biblical Christology. However, it is worth noting that their frequency and their quality is unevenly distributed over the treatise. They are more abundant and successful in the Questions dealing with the grace and the kenosis of Christ than in those dealing with his knowledge and power. This unevenness of scriptural grounding, while not entirely the cause of, does in fact coincide with the uneven theological worth of the different questions.

Two critical cautions need to be entered about St Thomas's handling of biblical texts. Firstly, he sometimes claims information about the earthly condition of Jesus from texts which, to an exegete, are primarily reflections of the Church's faith in the risen Christ. Secondly, he tends to read texts in the light of his own anthropology, when an exegete would require that semitic patterns of thought and language should be used to disclose the meaning of the text and discover the underlying facts. One could, of course, claim that these texts had, by the time St Thomas wrote, become vehicles of a constantly evolving Christian tradition, and that he was entitled to appeal to the authority of that tradition as it was carried and expressed by the scriptural text. But since the tradition must always be submitted to the critique of the original biblical meaning, one has to ask whether his anthropology so distorts the biblical data that his theological portrait of the human condition of Christ falsifies the Christ of the Gospel.

Anthropology

Exegetes frequently blame the Hellenism of the Latin theological tradition for many distortions of biblical revelation, particularly in the area of anthropology. In the interests of pure exegesis and biblical theology they are probably entitled to do so. To get at the mind of a biblical author one has to discard one's own presuppositions and try to enter into the mentality, generally semitic, which underlies the author's statements. To the extent that this can be done it is a necessary task. But a further task remains for a Christian interpreter, in which he passes from being an exegete to becoming a theologian. The theologian has to re-interpret the biblical message in terms of his own culture. He cannot make his own assertions about reality in semitic categories because they are not the normal window on reality that his mind employs; they are not the presuppositions that give meaning to his experience. And a theologian has to be true to his own window on reality if he is to assert the truth and reality of what has been handed on to him in the Church and if he is to communi-

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cate it to those who share his presuppositions. This, in fact, is what the theological enterprise in the Church has been attempting throughout its history. It happened that the cultural influences that dominated Latin theology were Greek and Roman. It is hardly surprising, and is *prima facie* quite legitimate, that it should have a strong strain of Hellenism. To say that the theology of St Thomas is influenced by Hellenism is not necessarily a judgment of its truth or value. It is simply to state a matter of historical fact.

Nor is it true to state that it is necessarily unbiblical on the one hand, or uncongenial to modern culture on the other. Biblical anthropology is primitive, in the sense of being pre-reflective, pre-academic. Like any form of primitive thought or art it can have a universal human appeal. The spontaneous reaction of any man to it is liable to be recognition and acceptance—whatever his second thoughts about it may be. Greek anthropology, on the other hand, is reflective, academic, technical. Because it belongs to this different phase of human thought it is not necessarily opposed to the primitive anthropology of the Bible. It could conceivably be a legitimate refinement of man's thought about a reality that is described more bluntly in the Bible. On the other hand Greek anthropology can claim to have achieved such classical status in the history of human thought that, at least in its general lines, it must have something of value to offer any civilization that is searching out the meaning of human life. European thought, which carries a permanent residue of Hellenism, has in fact filtered through to most of the progressive cultures of the world. Some at least of the thoughts of Chairman Mao are not entirely new to a European.

To make a decisive judgment, then, about the truth and value of a particular theology, it is not enough to pin an historical label on it. There are more fundamental criteria. Firstly it has to be asked if the philosophical and anthropological presuppositions of a given theology are true: do they accord with our experience of reality; do they make sense of reality and reveal its meaning? One is required to apply this philosophical criterion to any set of presuppositions, even to the semitic presuppositions found in the Bible. Some of the anthropological categories of the Bible are just as mythological as much of its cosmology. This is not to say that a purely biblical theology is false or misleading, or that these categories are not the essential key to the exegete's task. But it does raise the possibility that it might be a positive advantage for Christian faith if theology could restate the biblical message in other, more exact and revealing categories. Whether Greek categories have the truth and the relevance to play this role is a matter of philosophical debate. It is arguable that they have a lot to contribute; arguable too that they have limitations, which require that they

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be corrected and improved by other philosophical insights, contributed for example by contemporary philosophy.

There is another criterion to be applied to the philosophical and anthropological presuppositions of any theology. Christian revelation is not alone a disclosure of God to man but a disclosure of man to himself. The believer accepts some fundamental assumptions about man, particularly about the capacity he has for a unique relationship with God, after whose image he is made. An anthropology that denies these assumptions would make Christian faith intellectually untenable. The believer will criticize such an anthropology, either to the point of total rejection, or at least by trying to correct and develop its inherent virtualities, according to its own logic, so that it becomes more truthful in itself and more serviceable for the understanding of faith.

The section of the *Summa* presented in this volume employs a Greek-type anthropology to interpret the data of revelation about Christ's human condition. To say this is, as we have suggested, to state an historical fact, not to make an immediate value judgment. Evaluation has to be done according to criteria drawn from philosophy and faith. St Thomas himself treats his Hellenistic inheritance with considerable discretion, regularly criticizing it on philosophical grounds. He has to do this, anyhow if he is to choose between the different streams of Hellenistic thought. It is on philosophical grounds that he opts generally for Aristotle rather than Plato; and within the Aristotelean tradition he makes further choices—for instance between the Arabian commentators known to him as Averroës and Avicenna. His precise position is not always appreciated by critics, who condemn his Hellenism when their real quarrel is with some of the exaggerated idealism and dualism of Plato that has been decisively rejected by St Thomas. For example, his understanding of the relationship between soul and body is a long way from the kind of platonic dualism stigmatized by contemporary exegetes and philosophers.

More significant is the influence which the anthropological assumptions of revelation have on this section of the *Summa*. His belief that man has been made in the image of God, his belief in the resurrection of the body, in the sanctifying power of the body of Christ and in the redemptive value of suffering forces him to refine some of the positions of Hellenist anthropology to a point that might have surprised Aristotle. The truth, if not the categories, of biblical anthropology is not as foreign to the thought of St Thomas as some superficial judgments about him would lead one to believe.

This is not to claim that the anthropology of St Thomas is beyond correction and improvement, or that his conclusions about Christ in this section of the *Summa* do not need any modification. For example, his

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thinking about the kinds and degrees of knowledge that are required for human fulfilment might be questioned both on philosophical grounds and on grounds of compatibility with biblical revelation of what it is to be fully human. Knowledge is understood by him in a rather objective and eidetic sense. His views might be usefully balanced by greater attention to the subjective factors, such as they are analysed for example by contemporary personalist philosophies. And his insistence that, to be fully perfect, Christ had to have all his gifts from the beginning of his existence might be tempered by a more positive appreciation of the value of growth in human existence. Exegetes would certainly be happier if some of the claims he makes for Christ were modified. Paradoxically these claims were all made in the interests of safeguarding the truth of Christ's humanity. Most of them are conclusions drawn by *a priori* deduction from a certain view of what it is to be truly and perfectly human. If it were proved anthropologically that the truth and perfection of humanity could be assured by more modest gifts a disciple of St Thomas should have no great difficulty about withdrawing some of his more elaborate claims for Christ.

Theology

In addition to his anthropological presuppositions St Thomas employs some more specifically theological principles throughout this treatise. The theologian has to connect any area of revelation he studies with the total mystery of God's dealings with man. St Thomas inserts what he has to say about the human condition of Christ within the total mystery by connecting it on the one hand with what he has had to say in the opening questions of the *Tertia Pars* about the Incarnation and, on the other hand, with what he will have to say later on about the saving work of Christ and man's response to it. The human condition of Christ must be shown to make sense in relation to the hypostatic union and to the redemption of mankind.

The link with the hypostatic union is made by what can be called *the principle of perfection*: because Christ is the incarnate Son of God he must, in his human condition, have the maximum human perfection—of grace, knowledge, power and sensibility. Underlying this Christological principle is the general trend of the *Summa* to see all reality from the point of view of a God who is the bounteous source of goodness, whose creative self-giving is limited only by his wisdom, and whose prodigality is never wasteful because all that he gives returns to himself as its final end. Of course God remains sovereignly free and one cannot rationalize his gifts by any kind of logical necessity. But the logic of his goodness and love is very persuasive. St Thomas always expects the best of God. He does not expect a great deal from creatures when they are left to themselves. But seeing them as he does in the light of God who is their beginning and end,

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he is an optimist about their possibilities. Christ, in whom God's self-giving reaches its fulness, ought to have every created perfection. The hypostatic union makes the perfection of Christ's human condition a matter of principle.

The principle of perfection is reinforced by the connection between the human condition of Christ and his work as Saviour. By all the laws of causality the Saviour must be superior to the saved; he must have the perfections which he is going to communicate to others in an eminent and universal way. Theologically, Christ must have the best of everything.

But while the work of redemption supports the principle of perfection it contributes another distinctive and qualifying principle to St Thomas's explanation of the human condition of Christ. This may be called *the principle of economy*: in order to carry out the work of man's redemption on earth Christ had to accept certain limitations and disabilities. In fact Christ did not have every possible human perfection. If one were relying on the principle of perfection alone this situation would be unintelligible; and one might be tempted, as theologians have been from time to time, to deny the facts. But when the needs of the economy—for instance, the need there was for Christ to share our human suffering—are accepted as a principle of explanation, one can begin to understand the limitations and disabilities of Christ. It is to this principle of economy that St Thomas regularly turns when he has to cope with objectors reluctant to admit any human limitations in Christ. And he makes it the corner-stone of his theology of the kenosis of Christ in Questions 14–15. There, it opens the way to understanding why Christ stripped himself of many of the privileges he was entitled to as the Son of God. At the same time it establishes the limits of his emptying. If the needs of the redemption are the only justification for disabilities in Christ, then a human weakness which does not serve those needs is unacceptable and unintelligible. Unless a definite exception is required by the needs of the economy, the principle of perfection prevails.

There is a third theological principle to which St Thomas occasionally appeals in this treatise. It may be called *the principle of credibility*. Christ has to be not alone human but credibly human for those called to believe in him as their saviour. He has, therefore, to adopt a human condition that leaves no one in any doubt about his humanity and his fellowship with other men. A theology which exaggerates his perfection would lessen his attraction for men needing a saviour who can sympathize with them and share their lot. St Thomas explains some of the limitations of Christ's perfection by this principle of credibility. Christ was what he was so that men should be left in no doubt that he was truly man. One might say that this principle of credibility is only a particular application of the principle

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of economy. But it is an application which deserves to be given independent standing, because it draws attention to the place that must be given to our response to the economy in any explanation of Christ's human condition.

Contemporary Christology pays particular attention to this human credibility of Christ. Whereas St Thomas begins this thinking about the human condition of Christ with the principle of perfection and qualifies it by the principles of economy and credibility until he has reached a balanced picture of Christ, the contemporary tendency is to start with assertions about the credible humanity of Jesus, taken as self-evident, and work towards an admission of his unique perfection as the incarnate Son of God. Each of these theologies aims to understand the mystery of Christ. The contemporary has certain kerygmatic and catechetical advantages. The classical method followed by St Thomas has the advantage of measuring Christ by the bounty of God rather than by the needs of men. And if one believes that man's needs and possibilities transcend his own awareness of them, because they have been expanded by the gift of God, one may be persuaded that St Thomas's approach is ultimately more revealing.

Organization of material

St Thomas divides the features of Christ's human condition that he wants to study into perfections and defects (prologue to Question 7). What he puts under the heading of perfection fits easily enough: grace, knowledge and power are perfections of personality, intellect and activity upon other creatures, respectively; and they have been studied in men and angels throughout the earlier parts of the *Summa*. The task of the Third Part is to show why and in what measure Christ had them, and how they relate him to God and to other creatures. Defects or disabilities is not quite so obvious a rubric to cover the other part of the treatise (Questions 14–15). Some of the things he dealt with there turn out to be normal requirements for reaching human fulfilment—emotions, for example, and the ability to cope with pain. In fact the standard against which St Thomas judges disabilities appears to be the perfection man might have had in the state of original justice, or at least in his final beatitude. What he is really dealing with then are the passing nuisances with which man has to cope on earth as he works out his perfection. These nuisances have been analysed throughout the anthropological parts of the *Summa*, and their appearance in Christ's humanity has now to be examined. It turns out that, while Christ shares many of the less pleasant features of our human condition, there is one radical difference between him and us. In his anthropology St Thomas blames sin and its consequences for turning many of the normal features of our humanity into nuisances. At the heart of his discussion of Christ's disabilities he establishes that Christ was not a sinner. Hence,

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while he admits that Christ shared many of our human disabilities, because the economy of our redemption required it, he will maintain that their significance in Christ is quite different. In us they are the inescapable proof that we need a saviour. In Christ they are limitations deliberately undertaken so that he can be our Saviour.

The three headings under which the perfections of Christ are discussed—grace, knowledge and power—are based on an obvious, but not entirely watertight division. The treatment of grace includes some considerations on the knowledge and power of Christ. It is the most comprehensive of the three sections, the most solidly grounded on biblical material, and it employs the more generally accepted elements of St Thomas's anthropology. Yet the organization of the material is decidedly theological and scholastic. From the time of Augustine western theology had been looking at the gifts enjoyed by Christ's humanity in terms of grace. At the heart of the speculation was a text variously attributed to Augustine or Ambrose (but which cannot be traced in their works), *Quidquid convenit Filio Dei per naturam convenit filio hominis per gratiam*. As the notion of grace was gradually refined theologians began to find a threefold grace in Christ: the grace of union, which made him worthy to be the Son of God; personal grace, which supernaturalized and perfected his own human activity; and capital grace, which gave him power to sanctify other men. Since, in fact, it was the same grace that was being dealt with under each of these terms, and since the grace of Christ under any heading has to be considered both in relation to the hypostatic union, and as it overflows to other men, there was considerable overlapping and repetition in the usual threefold treatment of Christ's grace. Added to that was some disagreement about the precise meaning of these three terms. True to his promise in the prologue of the *Summa*, St Thomas sets about simplifying matters. Because he holds that habitual grace cannot be a disposition for the hypostatic union, he sees no point in discussing Christ's created grace as a grace of union. If the term *gratia unionis* is to be retained he believes it should mean the hypostatic union itself, considered as a gift of God. And since he has already dealt with that subject in the opening questions of the Third Part he is able to dispense with a question on the grace of union in the present treatise (cf. prologue to Question 7). The question on Christ's personal grace obviously has to remain. He retains the traditional question on capital grace (Question 8), but gives it a content and purpose that surpasses anything it previously had. In his scholastic predecessors the discussion on capital grace tended to be a rather vague, metaphorical treatment of the overflowing fulness of Christ's grace. St Thomas makes his question a very precise analysis of capital grace in terms of its specifying object. What stands over against Christ is not just the mass of mankind but mankind

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organized in a mystical ecclesial body. It is because it flows into a mystical body that Christ's grace can be specified as capital; this is what gives capital grace a distinct meaning or *ratio*, in spite of its real identity with Christ's personal grace (8, 5). The question on capital grace allows St Thomas to take the ecclesiological elements scattered throughout the Second Part of the *Summa* into the mystery of Christ. Conversely, it allows him to discuss the social and historical significance of Christ in the economy of grace, and to give a formal ecclesiological quality to the Christology he develops in the remainder of the Third Part. From this point on the work of Christ can be seen as related specifically to the Church.

It could be claimed that the knowledge of Christ forms part of his grace and should not be discussed under a separate heading. Some, at least, of his knowledge is supernatural gift and contributes to his personal intimacy with God. And other aspects of his knowledge have, in fact, already been dealt with in the question on his personal grace—faith and prophecy, for example. However, it is not the gift aspect of Christ's knowledge that interests St Thomas in Questions 9–12. What he wants to examine are the technical modalities of Christ's intellectual life. In his anthropology he has already established the different kinds of knowledge of which man is capable. If he is to take the humanity of Christ seriously he has to ask whether and to what degree Christ had these different forms of knowledge. His programme has already been plotted for him by his anthropology, and so he discusses the beatific, infused and acquired knowledge of Christ. One may question his anthropology and wonder if he overplays the principle of perfection to the detriment of biblical evidence about Christ. But one must at least admit that he has to raise the questions he does if he is to be true to his own methodology.

His question about the power of Christ (Question 13) is limited to a study of the physical power of Christ's soul. He does not deal with the moral power and authority of Christ under this heading, because that depends formally on his habitual grace. The question corresponds to the discussions of the action of God and creatures found at the end of the First Part of the *Summa*, rather than to the moral discussions about man's action found in the Second Part. In fact, the main concern seems to be to protect the humanity of Christ from exaggerated claims made about its omnipotence. In showing that Christ's humanity obeys the ordinary laws of creaturely action St Thomas at once safeguards the truth of that humanity and shows how, nevertheless, that humanity can collaborate instrumentally with God in the total work of salvation.

Finally, the defects of Christ are divided, somewhat artificially, into defects of body and of soul. The first question (Question 14) looks at the physical facts of Christ's human weakness and discusses why Christ should

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have had them. Question 15 raises the discussion to the plane of conscience and consciousness. It is not really the matter of the questions that differs but the point of view.

The goal of any Christian theology must be to open the eye of the mind to the mystery of God's love that reveals itself in the face of Christ Jesus. The goal becomes most difficult when theology is dealing with the contingent features of Christ's human condition and actual life, because here the bounty and freedom of God is at its most mysterious. At this point theological assertions become increasingly tentative and reason must become increasingly reverent. In this treatise St Thomas offers a coherent, searching and principled approach to the mystery of Christ's human condition. His conclusions never entirely match the mystery. But the rigour no less than the reverence of his questioning can teach theology a great deal about its unending task of serving *fides quærens intellectum*.