

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-02968-1 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 60 - Penance, (3a. 84-90)

Reginald Masterson O.P. and T. C. O'Brien O.P.

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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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ST THOMAS AQUINAS
SUMMA
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Latin text and English translation,
Introductions, Notes, Appendices
and Glossaries



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HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL VI

WAS PLEASED to grant an audience, on 13 December 1963, to a group, representing the Dominican Editors and the combined Publishers of the new translation of the *Summa Theologiae* of St Thomas, led by His Eminence Michael Cardinal Browne, of the Order of Preachers, and the Most Reverend Father Aniceto Fernandez, Master General of the same Order.

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AT THIS AUDIENCE

THE HOLY FATHER made a cordial allocution in which he first welcomed the representatives of a project in which he found particular interest. He went on to laud the perennial value of St Thomas's doctrine as embodying universal truths in so cogent a fashion. This doctrine, he said, is a treasure belonging not only to the Dominican Order but to the whole Church, and indeed to the whole world; it is not merely medieval but valid for all times, not least of all for our own.

His Holiness therefore commended the enterprise of Dominicans from English-speaking Provinces of the Order and of their friends; they were undertaking a difficult task, less because the thought of St Thomas is complicated or his language subtle, than because the clarity of his thought and exactness of language is so difficult to translate. Yet the successful outcome of their efforts would undoubtedly contribute to the religious and cultural well-being of the English-speaking world.

What gave him great satisfaction was the notable evidence of interest in the spread of divine truth on the part of the eminent laymen concerned, members of different communions yet united in a common venture.

For these reasons the Holy Father wished it all success, and warmly encouraged and blessed all those engaged. He was happy to receive the first volume presented to him as a gesture of homage, and promised that he would follow with interest the progress of the work and look forward to the regular appearance of all the subsequent volumes.

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GENERAL PREFACE

BY OFFICIAL APPOINTMENT THE SUMMA PROVIDES THE FRAMEWORK for Catholic studies in systematic theology and for a classical Christian philosophy. Yet the work, which is more than a text-book for professional training, is also the witness of developing tradition and the source of living science about divine things. For faith seeks understanding in the contemplation of God's Logos, his wisdom and saving providence, running through the whole universe.

The purpose, then, of this edition is not narrowly clerical, but to share with all Christians a treasury which is part of their common heritage. Moreover, it consults the interests of many who would not claim to be believers, and yet appreciate the integrity which takes religion into hard thinking.

Accordingly the editors have kept in mind the needs of the general reader who can respond to the reasons in Christianity, as well as of technical theologians and philosophers.

Putting the Latin text alongside the English is part of the purpose. The reader with a smattering of Latin can be reassured when the translator, in order to be clear and readable, renders the thought of St Thomas into the freedom of another idiom without circumlocution or paraphrase.

There are two more reasons for the inclusion of the Latin text. First, to help the editors themselves, for the author's thought is too lissom to be uniformly and flatly transliterated; it rings with analogies, and its precision cannot be reduced to a table of terms. A rigid consistency has not been imposed on the editors of the different volumes among themselves; the original is given, and the student can judge for himself.

Next, to help those whose native tongue is not English or whose duty it is to study theology in Latin, of whom many are called to teach and preach through the medium of the most widespread language of the world, now becoming the second language of the Church.

The Latin is a sound working text, selected, paragraphed, and punctuated by the responsible editor. Important variations, in manuscripts and such major printed editions as the Piana and Leonine, are indicated. The English corresponds paragraph by paragraph and almost always sentence by sentence. Each of the sixty volumes, so far as is possible, will be complete in itself, to serve as a text for a special course or for private study.

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AND

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EDITORIAL NOTES

THE TEXT AND TRANSLATION

THE LATIN text relies chiefly on the 'Leonine' edition, commissioned by Leo XIII towards the end of the last century. In only two or three instances has an alternative reading been chosen from earlier editions or manuscripts. This choice has been dictated by St Thomas's general usage and the particular context. The attempt has not been to establish a critical text, but to offer a sound working version. The punctuation is that of the editors.

The English has been prepared with a view to being read independently of the Latin, though reference to this has been made easy. Where technical terms have been retained, they are explained in footnotes. Still, a serious effort has been made to give an accurate English equivalent for even the most 'scholastic' expressions, while at the same time avoiding translation by circumlocution or an explanatory rendering. The Glossary can generally be relied upon to give further assistance where a term offers difficulty to the reader.

FOOTNOTES

Those signified by a superior number are the references given by St Thomas, 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.

APPENDICES

The three appendices are largely a matter of expressing some of the most important themes in the treatise by a survey of their development through the particular articles and Questions. It is hoped they will assist the reader in forming a general impression of the treatise as a whole.

REFERENCES

Biblical references are to the Vulgate; English translations are from the Douay Bible. Patristic references are to Migne (PG, Greek Fathers; PL, Latin Fathers). *The Gloss* always refers to the *Glossa Ordinaria*; 'a gloss' refers to others cited by St Thomas (cf 85, 3, note 6). Abbreviations to St Thomas's works are as follows:

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

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Summa Contra Gentiles, CG. Book, chapter; e.g. CG 1, 28.

Scriptum in IV Libros Sententiarum, Sent. Book, distinction, question, article, solution or *quæstiuncula*, reply; e.g. III Sent. 25, 2, 3, ii ad 3.

Compendium Theologiæ, *Compend. Theol.*

Commentaries of Scripture (*lecturæ*, *expositiones*): Job, *In Job*; Psalms, *In Psal.*; 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.* References to Aristotle give the Bekker annotation.

Quæstiones quodlibetales (de quolibet), *Quodl.*

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

References to Denz. are to the *Enchiridion Symbolorum*, Denzinger Schönmetzger, ed. xxxii, 1963.

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INTRODUCTION

IN THE *Tertia Pars* of the *Summa* we have ‘the crowning of the whole work of theology’, the consideration of Christ the Saviour and the blessings he bestows on mankind. Among these are the sacraments ‘by which we obtain salvation’.¹ After a general inquiry into the ‘sacraments of the Church’ the special characteristics of each are set forth.² The treatise on Penance comes after those on Baptism, Confirmation and the Holy Eucharist, following the usual order of enumerating the sacraments.³ The place assigned to Penance is given a reason within the context of the comparison of man’s spiritual with his physical life. The sacraments listed before Penance are required for the essentials of life, birth, growth, nourishment. Penance has its place on the supposition of the spiritual illness which is sin committed after Baptism.⁴ In a special sense, then, Penance is a remedy to correct and to remove sin, particularly mortal sin.⁵ Penance also has a distinctive note, having an ‘effect corresponding to human acts’, so that the act of the penitent ‘stands in the place of the matter’.⁶ These two points are much in evidence in the development of the treatise.⁷

Only part of its original plan was completed by St Thomas.⁸ This volume contains that part; it deals with the sacrament of Penance and with the virtue, which in Latin bears the same name.⁹ Because the matter of the sacrament is the penitent’s acts, the virtue which is the source of these acts has this allied place in the treatise. Next the objective of both sacrament and virtue, namely the removal of sin, both mortal and venial, as well as its effects, is considered. Finally, the human acts of the penitent as ‘parts of the sacrament’ are examined in the final question of the *Summa*.

A comprehensive theological study of Penance must look at its complex history, the development of doctrine and practice, the penitential controversies of the early centuries, the gradual theological precisions and the

¹3a. Prologue

²3a. 60, Prologue

³The order of enumeration—Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, Matrimony—comes definitively into theology with Peter Lombard, iv, *Sent.* 2, 1; the first list found in a general council of the Church, Lateran IV, follows this order, cf *Denz.* 860 (cf *DTC* xiv, 1 548–58)

⁴3a. 65, 1–4; 84, 5 & 6

⁵3a. 65, 1

⁶84, 1 ad 1 & ad 2

⁷cf 84, Prologue

⁸cf 84, 1 note a

⁹cf 84, 1 note b

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declarations of the Church, culminating with the Council of Trent.¹⁰ The earlier history of the doctrine is not the concern of the *Summa*. It is well, however, to take note of the frequent recourse of these questions to the *Decretals* of Gratian on many points, especially those of actual discipline or practice. And it is frequently through the *Decretals* that patristic writings on the subject are quoted by St Thomas. This is not surprising, of course, both because of the coincidence of interest between canonist and theologian here, and because the canonists made valuable contributions to the development of teaching on the sacraments.¹¹ As always it is to meaning, however, that St Thomas looks, the meaning here of the mystery of Christian repentance and its relationship to the mystery of sin and justification. His theological insight goes to the heart of these issues. Like the Council of Trent, he sees them together as they exist in the Christian life.

Because sin and pardon are the issues, this treatise underscores the character of the *Summa*. This is not an encyclopaedic collation, but an organism seeking to give expression to the meaning and order in God's truth. The questions on Penance must be read with one finger in the *Secunda Pars* where the essential significance of sin and grace, particularly justification, is expressed. The whole of the *Tertia Pars* deals with the actual history of God's plan of salvation through Christ. Here the concrete status that sin and pardon have in this plan is set forth. Penance, sacrament and virtue, is the way of salvation provided by Christ for the sinner; in Penance the existential realization of the Christian's justification after falling from grace takes place. Relying on the work of the *Secunda Pars* for essential meanings, St Thomas is able to speak concisely, without undue repetitiveness about this way of pardon.

The alliance of sacrament and virtue, along with one key phrase in the treatise—'Penance is concerned with sins as they are remediable by man's action co-operating with God towards justification'—lead to the core of the mystery of sin and forgiveness. Revelation itself is behind the insistence that repentance is the response of a person through Christ's Passion to God's invitation to return to him after sin. This is the meaning of sacrament and virtue alike. Much is being discussed today about the 'ecclesial' character of Penance; about the meaning and frequency of auricular confession. These problems are not phrased in this manner in the pages of the *Summa*. But the indispensable understanding of the Christian *metanoia* is. Christ has redeemed us; every man is saved by his own individual conjunc-

¹⁰cf *DTC* XIV, I 'Sacrement'; XI, 2 'Pénitence'; Galtier, P., *L'Église et la Rémission des Péchés aux Premiers Siècles*, Paris, 1932; Anciaux, P., *The Sacrament of Penance*, New York, 1962; Poschmann, B., *Penance and the Anointing of the Sick*, London, 1964.

¹¹cf *DTC* XIV, 'Sacrement' 547–8

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tion with Christ through faith and the sacraments of the faith. The power of Christ's Passion is linked to each person through these; this is how one becomes a living member of Christ's body.¹² When the flow of life has been cut off by mortal sin, life can be received anew only by turning back from death and being reunited to Christ. When a person cuts himself off from the life of Christ's body, only by his responsible co-operation under grace can he be restored to life and share fully in the unity of Christ's body. This is what Christian repentance is. This is what St Thomas is talking about.

Because Penance is so much the expression of the given way of salvation for the sinner, the virtue of repentance is coupled with the sacrament in the treatise. From the Prologue of the *Secunda Secundæ* and because here, in Question 85, article 3, penitence is said to be a potential part of justice, one might wonder why it is not examined in the *Secunda Pars* along with other virtues of the Christian life.¹³ The answer is clear. For penitence is the virtue of the sinner, and this makes it something of a paradox.

Virtues are the mark and the source of moral soundness; penitence has its meaning against the background of moral death. It is a resurrection. And it can be fully meaningful only in the context of the paradox included in Redemption itself. Christ has redeemed us and given us the power of being incorporated into his life. But he has provided as well for the contingency of spiritual death and disease. The whole standing of penitence is its place in this plan of salvation. Thus it is considered in conjunction with the sacrament. For it is given us by Christ as a power for the fruitful use of this sacrament, and in turn from the sacrament it becomes a cure that is meant to be a remedy against future sin.¹⁴ It is meant as well to be the cause whereby the converted sinner, by his willing repentance and atonement, becomes conformed to the sufferings of Christ. The virtue of repentance has its place here because the mystery of sin and pardon is so much the mystery of God's plenteous redemption through Christ the Saviour.

¹²cf 3a. 49, 1 ad 4

¹³See Appendix 2

¹⁴cf 84, 1 ad 3