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PREFACE - TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE - FOREWORD

INTRODUCTION

PART I - THE SOURCES OF THE INTERIOR LIFE AND ITS END

I. THE LIFE OF GRACE, ETERNAL LIFE BEGUN

II. THE INTERIOR LIFE AND INTIMATE CONVERSATION WITH GOD

III. THE SPIRITUAL ORGANISM

The interior life, which presupposes the state of grace, consists, as we have seen, in a generous tendency of the soul toward God, in which little by little each one's intimate conversation with himself is elevated, is transformed, and becomes an intimate conversation of the soul with God. It is, we said, eternal life begun in the obscurity of faith before reaching its full development in the clarity of that vision which cannot be lost.

Better to comprehend what this seed of eternal life, *semen gloriae*, is in us, we must ponder the fact that from sanctifying grace spring forth in our faculties the infused virtues, both theological and moral, and also the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost; virtues and gifts which are like the subordinated functions of one and the same organism, a spiritual organism, which ought to develop until our entrance into heaven.

ARTICLE I - THE NATURAL LIFE AND THE SUPERNATURAL LIFE OF THE SOUL (vol 1., pp. 48-52 in the TAN edition)

We must distinguish clearly in our soul what belongs to its very nature and what is an entirely gratuitous gift of God. The same distinction must be made for the angels

who also have a nature which, though entirely spiritual, is very inferior to the gift of grace.

If we carefully consider the human soul in its nature, we see two quite different regions in it: one belongs to the sensible order, the other to the suprasensible or intellectual order. The sensitive part of the soul is that which is common to men and animals; it includes the external senses and the internal senses, comprising the imagination, the sensible memory, and also sensibility, or the sensitive appetite, whence spring the various passions or emotions, which we call sensible love and hatred, desire and aversion, sensible joy and sadness, hope and despair, audacity and fear, and anger. All this sensitive life exists in the animal, whether its passions are mild like those of the dove or lamb, or whether they are strong like those of the wolf and the lion.

Above this sensitive part common to men and animals, our nature likewise possesses an intellectual part, which is common to men and angels, although it is far more vigorous and beautiful in the angel. By this intellectual part our soul towers above our body; this is why we say that the soul is spiritual, that it does not intrinsically depend on the body and will thus be able to survive the body after death.

From the essence of the soul in this elevated region spring our two higher faculties, the intellect and the will.⁽¹⁾ The intellect knows not only sensible qualities, colors, and sounds, but also being, the intelligible reality, of necessary and universal truths, such as the following: "Nothing happens without a cause, and, in the last analysis, without a supreme cause. We must do good and avoid evil. Do what you ought to, come what may." An animal will never attain to the knowledge of these principles; even if its imagination were continually growing in perfection, it would never attain to the intellectual order of necessary and universal truths. Its imagination does not pass beyond the order of sensible qualities, known here or there in their contingent singularity.

Since the intellect knows the good in a universal manner, and not only the delectable or useful good but the upright and reasonable good (for example: Die rather than become a traitor), it follows that the will can love this good, will it, and accomplish it. Thereby the intellect immensely dominates the sensitive part or the emotions common to men and animals. By his intellect and his will, man resembles the angel; although his intellect, in contrast to the angelic intellect, depends in this present life on the senses, which propose to it the first objects that it knows.

The two higher faculties, the intellect and the will, can develop greatly as we see in men of genius and superior men of action. These faculties could, however, develop forever without ever knowing and loving the intimate life of God, which is of another order, entirely supernatural, and supernatural alike for angels and men. Man and the angel can indeed know God naturally from without, by the reflection of His perfections in creatures; but no created and creatable intellect can by its natural powers attain, even confusedly and obscurely, the essential and formal object of the divine intellect.(2) To hold that it could be done would be to maintain that this created intellect is of the same nature as God, since it would be specified by the same formal object.(3) As St. Paul says: "For what man knoweth the things of a man, but the spirit of a man that is in him? So the things also that are of God no man knoweth, but the Spirit of God." (4) This order is essentially supernatural.

Sanctifying grace, the seed of glory, introduces us into this higher order of truth and life. It is an essentially supernatural life, a participation in the intimate life of God, in the divine nature, since it even now prepares us to see God some day as He sees Himself and to love Him as He loves Himself. St. Paul has declared to us: "That eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him. But to us God hath revealed them by His Spirit. For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (5)

Sanctifying grace, which makes us begin to live in this higher, supra-angelic order of the intimate life of God, is like a divine graft received in the very essence of the soul to elevate its vitality and to make it bear no longer merely natural fruits but supernatural ones, meritorious acts that merit eternal life for us.

This divine graft of sanctifying grace is, therefore, in us an essentially supernatural life, immensely superior to a sensible miracle and above the natural life of our spiritual and immortal soul.(6)

Even now this life of grace develops in us under the form of the infused virtues and of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. As in the natural order, our intellectual and sensitive faculties spring from the very essence of our soul, so in the supernatural order, from sanctifying grace, received in the essence of the soul, spring, in our superior and inferior faculties, the infused virtues and the gifts which constitute, with the root from which they proceed, our spiritual or supernatural organism.(7) It was given to us in baptism, and is restored to us by absolution if we have the misfortune to lose it.

The spiritual organism may be expressed in the following table of the virtues and the gifts.

V I R T U E S	Theological	Charity -->	Gift of Wisdom	G I F T S
		Faith -->	Gift of Understanding	
		Hope -->	Gift of Knowledge	
	Moral	Prudence -->	Gift of Counsel	
		Justice		
		- Religion -->		
		- Penance	Gift of Piety	
		- Obedience		
		Fortitude -->		
		- Patience		
Temperance-->	Gift of Fortitude			
- Humility				
- Meekness				
- Chasity	Gift of Fear			

In connection with this table it would be well to consult St. Thomas' treatise on each of the virtues, where he speaks of the corresponding gift.(8) The gift of fear corresponds both to temperance and to hope,(9) but this latter virtue is also aided by the gift of knowledge, which shows us the emptiness of created things and thereby makes us desire God and depend on Him.(10)

ARTICLE II - THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES (vol 1, pp 52-57 in the TAN edition)

The theological virtues are infused virtues which have for their object God Himself, our supernatural last end. This is why they are called theological. By contrast, the moral virtues have for their object the supernatural means proportioned to our last end. Thus prudence directs our acts to this end; religion makes us render to God the worship that is due Him; justice makes us give to everyone what we owe him; fortitude and temperance regulate the sensible part of our soul to prevent it from

going astray and to make it cooperate, according to its manner, in our progress toward God.(1)

Among the theological virtues, infused faith, which makes us believe all that God has revealed because He is Truth itself, is like a higher spiritual sense which allows us to hear a divine harmony that is inaccessible to every other means of knowing. Infused faith is like a higher sense of hearing for the audition of a spiritual symphony which has God for its composer. This explains why there is an immense difference between the purely historical study of the Gospel and of the miracles which confirm it and the supernatural act of faith by which we believe in the Gospel as in the word of God. A very learned man who seeks the truth sincerely can make a historical and critical study of the Gospel and of the miracles which confirm it without as yet coming to the point where he believes. He will believe supernaturally only after receiving the grace of faith, which will introduce him into a higher world, superior even to the natural life of the angels. "Faith... is the gift of God," says St. Paul.(2) It is the basis of justification, for it makes us know the supernatural end toward which we must tend.(3) The Church has defined against the Semi-Pelagians that even the beginning of faith is a gift of grace.(4) All the great theologians have shown that infused faith is essentially supernatural, of a supernatural character very superior to that of the sensible miracle and also to that of prophecy which announces a contingent future in the natural order, such as the end of a war. Faith makes us, in fact, adhere supernaturally and infallibly to what God reveals to us about His intimate life, according as the Church, which is charged with preserving revelation, proposes it to us.

Infused faith belongs thus to an order immensely superior to the historical and critical study of the Gospel. As Lacordaire rightly says: "A scholar may study Catholic doctrine, not reject it bitterly, and may even say repeatedly: 'You are blessed to have faith; I should like to have it, but I cannot believe.' And he tells the truth: he wishes and he cannot (as yet), for study and good faith do not always conquer the truth, so that it may be clear that rational certitude is not the first certitude on which Catholic doctrine rests. This scholar therefore knows Catholic doctrine; he admits its facts; he feels its power; he agrees that there existed a man named Jesus Christ, who lived and died in a prodigious manner. He is touched by the blood of the martyrs, by the constitution of the Church; he will willingly say that it is the greatest phenomenon that has passed over the world. He will almost say that it is true. And yet he does not conclude; he feels himself oppressed by truth, as one is in a dream where one sees without seeing. The day comes, however, when this scholar drops on his knees; feeling the wretchedness of man, he lifts his hands to heaven and exclaims: 'Out of

the depths I have cried to Thee, a Lord!' At this moment something takes place in him, scales drop from his eyes, a mystery is accomplished, and he is changed. He is a man, meek and humble of heart; he can die, he has conquered the truth." (6)

If acquired faith, born of the historical examination of the Gospel and of the miracles which confirm it, were sufficient to attain the formal motive of Christian faith, infused faith would be useless, as would likewise infused hope and infused charity. Natural good will, spoken of by the Pelagians, would suffice. In the opinion of the Pelagians, grace and the infused virtues were not absolutely necessary for salvation, but only for the easier accomplishment of the acts of Christian life.(7)

Infused faith is like a faculty of supernatural audition, like a higher musical sense, which permits us to hear the spiritual harmonies of the kingdom of heaven, to hear, in a way, the voice of God through the prophets and His Son before we are admitted to see Him face to face. Between the unbeliever, who studies the Gospel, and the believer, there is a difference similar to that which exists between two persons who are listening to a Beethoven symphony, one of whom has a musical ear and the other has not. Both hear all the notes of the symphony, but one alone grasps its meaning and its soul. Similarly, only the believer adheres supernaturally to the Gospel as to the supernatural word of God; and he adheres to it even though untutored, while the learned man with all his means of criticism cannot, without infused faith, adhere to it in this manner. "He that believeth in the Son of God, hath the testimony of God in himself." (8)

This is what prompted Lacordaire to say: "What takes place in us when we believe is a phenomenon of intimate and superhuman light. I do not say that exterior things do not act on us as rational motives of certitude; but the very act of this supreme certitude, which I speak of, affects us directly like a luminous phenomenon (infused light of faith); I would even add, like a transluminous phenomenon. . . . We are affected by a transluminous light. . . . Otherwise how could there be proportion between our adherence, which would be natural and rational, and an object that surpasses nature and reason? . . . (9) Similarly sympathetic intuition between two men accomplishes in a single moment what logic could not have, brought about in many years. Just so, a sudden illumination sometimes enlightens the genius.

"A convert will tell you: 'I read, reasoned, wished, and I did not arrive. Then one day, I don't know how, on the street corner or at my fireside, I don't know, but I was no longer the same; I believed. . . . What took place in me at the moment of final conviction is of a totally different nature from what preceded. Remember the two disciples who were going to Emmaus.' " (10)

Fifty years ago, a man who did not yet know radio would have been surprised to hear it said that the day would come when a symphony that was being played in Vienna could be heard in Rome. By infused faith we hear a spiritual symphony which originates in heaven. The perfect chords of this symphony are called the mysteries of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the redemption, the Mass, and eternal life. By this superior sense of hearing man is guided toward eternity; he ought ever to advance toward the summit from which this harmony comes.

To tend effectively toward this supernatural end and to reach it, man has received two helps, hope and charity, which are like two wings. Without them he could make progress only in the direction indicated by reason; with them he flies in the direction pointed out by faith.

Just as our intellect cannot know our supernatural end without the infused light of faith, so our will cannot tend toward it unless its powers are augmented, increased more than tenfold, raised to a higher order. For this the will needs a supernatural love and a new impulse.

By hope we desire to possess God, and in order to attain Him we rely, not on our natural powers but on the help that He promised us. We rely on God Himself who always comes to the assistance of those who invoke Him.

Charity is a superior and more disinterested love of God. It makes us love God, not only in order to possess Him some day, but for Himself and more than ourselves, because of His infinite goodness, which is more lovable in itself than all the benefits we receive from it.⁽¹¹⁾ This virtue makes us love God above all else as a friend who has first loved us. It ordains to Him the acts of all the other virtues, which it vivifies and renders meritorious. Charity is our great supernatural force, the power of love which through centuries of persecution has surmounted all obstacles, even in weak children, such as St. Agnes and St. Lucy.

A man illumined by faith thus advances toward God by the two wings of hope and love. As soon as he sins mortally, however, he loses sanctifying grace and charity, since he turns away from God, whom he ceases to love more than himself. But divine mercy preserves infused faith and infused hope in him as long as he does not sin mortally against these virtues. He still preserves the light which indicates the road to be followed and he can still entrust himself to infinite mercy in order to ask of it the grace of conversion.

Of these three theological virtues, charity is the highest, and together with sanctifying grace, it ought to endure forever. "Charity," says St. Paul, "never falleth away. . . .

Now there remain faith, hope, and charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity." (12) It will last forever, eternally, when faith will have disappeared to give place to vision, and when hope will be succeeded by the inamissible possession of God clearly known.

Such are the superior functions of the spiritual organism: the three theological virtues which grow together, and with them the infused moral virtues that accompany them.

Footnotes to Articles I and II

1. To know and to will, the human soul and the angel need two faculties; in this respect both differ from God. God, who is Being itself, Thought, Wisdom, and Love, does not need faculties to know and to love. On the contrary, since the angel and the soul are not being itself, they have only a nature or an essence capable of receiving existence. Moreover, in them restricted existence, which is proper to them, is distinct from acts of knowledge and of will which have an object that is not limited; as a result the essence of the soul or of the angel, which receives the existence that is proper to them, is distinct from the faculties or powers capable of producing, not the permanent act of existence, but the successive acts of knowledge and of will. Cf. St. Thomas, Ia, q. 54, a. 1-3.

2 Thus a peasant who only very confusedly grasps intelligible reality, which is the object of philosophy, has, nevertheless, an intellect of the same nature as that of the philosopher; but neither one nor the other can by the sole natural powers of his reason know the intimate life of God.

3. Summa, Ia, q. 12, a.4.

4. See I Cor. 1:11.

5. Ibid.,2:9f.

6 The sensible miracle of the resurrection of a body restores natural life to the body in a supernatural manner; whereas sanctifying grace, which resuscitates a soul, is an essentially supernatural life. The miraculous effect of the corporal resurrection is not supernatural in itself but only by the mode of its production, "non quoad essentiam, sed quoad modum productionis suae." This is why a miracle, although supernatural by reason of its cause, is naturally knowable, whereas the essentially supernatural life of grace could not be known naturally. To mark this difference a miracle is often said to be preternatural rather than supernatural, and the latter word is reserved to designate the supernatural life.

7 See Ia IIae, q.63, a.3.

8. Summa, IIa IIae.

9. See *ibid.*, q. 141, a.1 ad 3um: "Temperance also has a corresponding gift, namely, fear, whereby man is withheld from the pleasures of the flesh, according to Ps. 118: 120: 'Pierce Thou my flesh with Thy fear.' . . . It also corresponds to the virtue of hope."

10. See *ibid.*, q.9, a.4.

1. See Ia IIae, q.62, a.1 f.

2. Eph. 2:8.

3. Rom. 4: 1-25. Abraham was justified by faith in God, "it was reputed to him unto justice." We ourselves will obtain salvation only by faith, which is a gift of God, by faith in Jesus Christ.

4. Cf. Denzinger, *Enchiridion*, no. 178.

5. St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q.6, a. 1, 2. As the virtues are specified by their object and their formal motive, this essentially supernatural character of infused faith depends on its first object and on its formal motive, which are inaccessible to all natural knowledge. The first object of faith is, in fact, God Himself in His intimate life, and the formal motive of infused faith is the authority of God revealing. Now we can by reason alone know the authority of God the Author of nature, and even the, Author of the sensible miracle; but we cannot by reason alone adhere to the authority of God the Author of grace. It is as the Author of grace that God intervenes when He reveals to us the essentially supernatural mysteries of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the redemption, the Eucharist, and eternal life. We have treated this important point at length in *De revelatione*, I, chap. 14, pp' 458-514, and in *Christian Perfection and Contemplation*, pp. 61-80.

6. H. Lacordaire, *Conferences a Notre-Dame de Paris*, 17th conference.

7. Cf. Denzinger, *Enchiridion*, no. 179. Acquired faith exists in the demons who have lost infused faith, but who believe as it were reluctantly because of the evidence of miracles and other signs of revelation. Cf. St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q.5, a.2; *De veritate*, q. 14, a.9 ad 4um.

8. See I John 5: 10.

9. St. Thomas says the same thing in *De veritate*, q.14, a.2: "Eternal life consists in the full knowledge of God. Hence there should be in us some beginning of this supernatural knowledge; and this is through faith, which from an infused light believes things that exceed natural reason."

Summa, Ia IIae, q.6, a.1, 2: Doubtless the light of faith is still obscure, but it is transluminously obscure, that is, superior and not inferior to the evidences of reason.

10. Lacordaire, loco cit.

11. See Ia IIae, q.62, a.4

12. See I Cor. 13:8,13

ARTICLE III - THE MORAL VIRTUES (pp 57-66 in the TAN edition)

To understand what the action of the spiritual organism should be, we must clearly

distinguish on the level below the theological virtues, the acquired moral virtues which were described by the moralists of pagan antiquity and which can exist without the state of grace, and the infused moral virtues which were unknown to pagan moralists and which are described in the Gospel. The acquired moral virtues, as their name indicates, are acquired by the repetition of acts under the direction of more or less cultivated natural reason. The infused moral virtues are called infused because God alone can produce them in us. They are not the result of the repetition of our acts; we received them in baptism as parts of our spiritual organism, and absolution restores them to us if we have had the misfortune to lose them. The acquired moral virtues, known by the pagans, have an object accessible to natural reason; the infused moral virtues have an essentially supernatural object commensurate with our supernatural end, an object which would be inaccessible without the infused light of faith in eternal life, in the gravity of sin, in the redemptive value of our Savior's passion, in the value of grace and of the sacraments. (1)

In relation to the interior life, we shall discuss first of all the acquired moral virtues, then the infused moral virtues, and finally the relationship of the first to the second. This subject matter is important, especially since some souls consecrated to God do not in their youth give sufficient importance to the moral virtues. Over and above a rather calm and pure sensibility, they seem to have the three theological virtues, but they almost lack the moral virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and so on.(2) Something like an intermediary stage seems to be lacking in their souls. Yet they have the infused moral virtues, but not the corresponding acquired moral virtues in a sufficient degree. Others, on the contrary, who are older and have seen the importance of the moral virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and so on, in social life, do not sufficiently value the theological virtues, which are, however, incomparably higher since they unite us to God.

THE ACQUIRED MORAL VIRTUES

We shall ascend progressively from the lower degrees of natural morality to those of supernatural morality. We must, first of all, observe with St. Thomas that in a man in the state of mortal sin there are often false virtues, such as the temperance of the miser. He practices it, not for love of honest and reasonable good, not for the sake of living according to right reason, but for love of that useful good, money. Similarly, if he pays his debts, it is rather to avoid the costs of a lawsuit than for love of justice.

Above these false virtues, true acquired moral virtues may exist even in a man in the

state of mortal sin. Some practice sobriety in order to live reasonably; for the same motive they pay their debts and teach some good principles to their children. But as long as a man remains in the state of mortal sin these true virtues remain in the state of a somewhat unstable disposition (*in statu dispositionis facile mobilis*); they are not yet in the state of solid virtue (*difficile mobilis*). Why is this? The answer is that, as long as a man is in the state of mortal sin, his will is habitually turned away from God. Instead of loving Him above all else, the sinner loves himself more than God, with the consequent result that he shows great weakness in accomplishing moral good, even of the natural order.

Moreover, the true acquired virtues which are in a man in the state of mortal sin lack solidity because they are not connected, because they are not sufficiently supported by the closely related moral virtues that are often lacking. We may take as an example a soldier who is naturally inclined to acts of bravery and has often shown himself courageous, but who is also inclined to become intoxicated. It may happen that, by reason of intemperance, on certain days he fails in the acquired virtue of fortitude and neglects his essential duties as a soldier.⁽³⁾ This man, who is inclined by temperament to be courageous, has not the virtue of fortitude as a virtue. Intemperance makes him fail in prudence, even in the domain of the virtue of fortitude. Prudence, which ought to direct all the moral virtues, supposes in fact that our will and our sensible appetites are habitually rectified as regards the end of these virtues. A man who drives several horses hitched to a chariot must see to it that each animal is already broken and docile. Now prudence is like the driver of all the moral virtues, *auriga virtutum*, and it ought to have them all in hand, so to speak. One does not go without the other: they are connected in prudence, which directs them.

Therefore, that true acquired virtues may not be simply in a state of unstable disposition, and that they may be in a state of solid virtue (*in statu virtutis*), they must be connected. That this may be so, a man must no longer be in the state of mortal sin, but his will must be set straight in regard to his last end. He must love God more than himself, at least with a real and efficacious love of esteem, if not with a love that is felt. This love is impossible without the state of grace and without charity.⁽⁴⁾ But after justification or conversion, these true acquired virtues may come to be stable virtues; they may become connected, relying on each other. Finally, under the influx of infused charity, they become the principle of acts meritorious of eternal life. For this reason, some theologians, such as Duns Scotus, have even thought it not necessary that we should have infused moral virtues.

THE INFUSED MORAL VIRTUES

Are the acquired moral virtues we have just spoken of sufficient, under the influence of charity, to constitute the spiritual organism of the virtues in a Christian? Must we receive infused moral virtues?

In conformity with tradition and with a decision of Pope Clement V at the Council of Vienne,(5) the Catechism of the Council of Trent (Part II, On baptism and its effects), answers: "The grace (sanctifying), which baptism confers, is accompanied by the glorious cortege of all the virtues, which, by a special gift of God, penetrate the soul simultaneously with it." This gift is an admirable effect of the Savior's passion which is applied to us by the sacrament of regeneration.

Moreover, in this bestowal of the infused moral virtues, there is a lofty fitness that has been well set forth by St. Thomas.(6) The means, he observes, must be proportioned to the end. By the infused theological virtues we are raised and directed toward the supernatural last end. Hence it is highly fitting that we should be raised and directed by the infused moral virtues in regard to supernatural means capable of leading us to our supernatural end.

God provides for our needs not less in the order of grace than in that of nature. Therefore, since in the order of nature He has given us the capacity to succeed in practicing the acquired moral virtues, it is highly fitting that in the order of grace He should give us infused moral virtues.

The acquired moral virtues do not suffice in a Christian to make him will, as he ought, the supernatural means ordained to eternal life. St. Thomas says, in fact, that there is an essential difference between the acquired temperance described by pagan moralists, and the Christian temperance spoken of in the Gospel. (7) The difference is analogous to that of an octave between two musical notes of the same name, separated by a complete scale. We often distinguish between philosophical temperance and Christian temperance, or again between the philosophical poverty of Crates' and the evangelical poverty of the disciples of Christ.

As St. Thomas remarks,(8) acquired temperance has a rule and formal object different from those of infused temperance. Acquired temperance keeps a just medium in the matter of food in order that we may live reasonably, that we may not injure our health or the exercise of our reason. Infused temperance, on the contrary, keeps a superior happy mean in the use of food in order that we may live in a Christian manner, as children of God, en route to the wholly supernatural life of

eternity. Infused temperance thus implies a more severe mortification than is implied by acquired temperance; it requires, as St. Paul says, that man chastise his body and bring it into subjection,(9) that he may become not only a virtuous citizen of society on earth, but one of the "fellow citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God." (10)

The same difference exists between the acquired virtue of religion, which ought to render to God, the Author of nature, the worship due Him, and the infused virtue of religion, which offers to God, the Author of grace, the essentially supernatural sacrifice of the Mass, which perpetuates in substance that of the cross. Between these two virtues of the same name, there is even more than the difference of an octave; there is a difference of orders, so that the acquired virtue of religion or that of temperance could grow forever by the repetition of acts without ever attaining the dignity of the slightest degree of the infused virtue of the same name. The tonality is entirely different; the spirit animating the word is no longer the same. In the case of the acquired virtue, the spirit is simply that of right reason; in the infused virtue, the spirit is that of faith which comes from God through grace.

These two formal objects and two motives of action differ greatly. Acquired prudence is ignorant of the supernatural motives of action; infused prudence knows them. Proceeding not from reason alone, but from reason illumined by infused faith, it knows the infinite elevation of our supernatural last end, God seen face to face. It knows, consequently, the gravity of mortal sin, the value of sanctifying grace and of the actual graces we must ask for every day in order to persevere, and the value of the sacraments that are to be received. Acquired prudence is ignorant of all of this, because this matter belongs to an essentially supernatural order.

What a difference there is between the philosophical modesty described by Aristotle and Christian humility! The latter presupposes the knowledge of two dogmas: that of creation ex nihilo, and that of the necessity of actual grace for taking the slightest step forward in the way of salvation. What a distance there is also between the virginity of the vestal virgin, whose duty it was to keep up the sacred fire, and that of the Christian virgin who consecrates her body and heart to God that she may follow our Lord Jesus Christ more perfectly!

These infused moral virtues are Christian prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, and those which accompany them, such as meekness and humility. They are connected with charity in this sense, that charity, which sets us aright in regard to our supernatural last end, cannot exist without them, without this multiple rectification in regard to the supernatural means of salvation.(11) Moreover, he who

loses charity by a mortal sin, loses the infused moral virtues; because, by turning away from the supernatural end, he loses infused rectification in regard to the means proportioned to this end. But it does not follow that he loses faith and hope, or that he loses the acquired virtues; the latter, however, cease to be stable and connected in him. In fact, a man who is in the state of mortal sin loves himself more than he does God and tends through egoism to fail in his duties even in the natural order.

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE INFUSED MORAL VIRTUES AND THE ACQUIRED MORAL VIRTUES

The relations between these virtues and their subordination are explained by what we have just said.(12) First of all, the facility of virtuous acts is not assured in the same way by the infused moral virtues as by the acquired moral virtues. The infused virtues give an intrinsic facility, without always excluding the extrinsic obstacles; whereas these extrinsic obstacles are excluded by the repetition of acts that engender the acquired virtues.

This is easily understood when by sacramental absolution the infused moral virtues, united to sanctifying grace and to charity, are restored to a penitent who, though he has imperfect contrition for his sins, has not the acquired moral virtues. This happens, for example, in the case of a man who is accustomed to becoming intoxicated and who makes his Easter confession with sufficient attrition. By absolution he receives, together with charity, the infused moral virtues, including temperance; but he has not yet the acquired virtue of temperance. The infused virtue that he receives gives him a certain intrinsic facility for the exercise of the obligatory acts of sobriety; but this infused virtue does not exclude the extrinsic obstacles which would be eliminated by the repetition of the acts that engender acquired temperance.(13) This penitent ought also to watch seriously over himself in order to avoid the occasions that would cause him to fall back into his habitual sin. For this reason it is evident that the acquired virtue of temperance greatly facilitates the exercise of the infused virtue of the same name.(14)

How are the virtues exercised? They are exercised simultaneously in such a way that the acquired virtue is subordinated to the infused virtue as a favorable disposition. Thus, in another domain, the agility of a pianist's or a harpist's fingers, which is acquired by a repetition of acts, favors the exercise of the musical art that is in the artist's intellect and not in his fingers. If he completely loses the nimbleness of his fingers as a result of paralysis, he can no longer exercise his art because of an

extrinsic obstacle. His art, however, remains in his practical intellect, as we see in the case of a musical genius who is stricken with paralysis. Normally there ought to be two subordinated functions that should be exercised together. The same holds true for the acquired virtue and for the infused virtue of the same name.(15) In like manner the imagination is at the service of the intellect, and the memory at that of knowledge.

These moral virtues consist in a happy mean between two extremes, shown by excess on the one hand and deficiency on the other. Thus the virtue of fortitude inclines us to keep a happy mean between fear, which flees danger without a reasonable motive, and temerity, which would lead us into the danger of getting our head broken without sufficient reason. However, this happy mean may be misunderstood. Epicureans and the tepid intend to keep a happy mean not for love of virtue, but for convenience' sake in order to flee from the discomforts of the contrary vices. They confuse the happy mean with mediocrity, which is found not precisely between two contrary evils, but halfway between good and evil. Mediocrity or tepidity flees the higher good as an extreme to be avoided. It hides its laziness under this principle: "The best is sometimes the enemy of the good"; and it ends by saying: "The best is often, if not always, the enemy of the good." It thus ends by confusing the good with the mediocre.

The right happy medium of true virtue is not only a mean between two contrary vices; it is also a summit. It rises like a culminating point between these contrary deviations; thus fortitude is superior to fear and temerity; true prudence to imprudence and cunning; magnanimity to pusillanimity and vain and ambitious presumption; liberality to avarice or stinginess and prodigality; true religion to impiety and superstition.

Moreover, this happy medium, which is at the same time a summit, tends to rise without deviating to the right or the left in proportion as virtue grows. In this sense the mean of the infused virtue is superior to that of the corresponding acquired virtue, for it depends on a higher rule and has in view a more elevated object.

We note, lastly, that spiritual authors insist particularly, as the Gospel does, on certain moral virtues which have a more special relation with God and an affinity with the theological virtues. They are religion or solid piety,(16) penance,(17) which render to God the worship and the reparation which are due to Him; meekness, (18) united to patience, perfect chastity, virginity,(19) and humility,(20) a fundamental virtue which excludes pride, the principle of every sin. By abasing us before God, humility raises us above pusillanimity and pride and prepares us for the

contemplation of divine things, for union with God. "God giveth grace to the humble," (21) and He makes them humble in order to load them with His gifts. Christ delighted in saying: "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart." (22) He alone, who was so well established in truth, could speak of His humility without losing it.

Such are the infused and acquired moral virtues which, with the theological virtues to which they are subordinated, constitute our spiritual organism. This ensemble of functions possesses great harmony, although venial sin may more or less frequently introduce discordant notes in it. All the parts of this spiritual organism grow together, says St. Thomas, like the five fingers of one hand.(23) This proportionate growth demonstrates that a soul cannot have lofty charity without profound humility, just as the highest branch of a tree rises toward heaven in proportion as its roots plunge more deeply into the soil. We must take care in the interior life that nothing troubles the harmony of this spiritual organism, as happens unfortunately in those who, while perhaps remaining in the state of grace, seem more preoccupied with human learning or exterior relations than with growth in faith, confidence, and the love of God.

To form a right idea of the spiritual organism, it is not sufficient to know these virtues. We must consider the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, and not ignore the diverse forms under which divine help is offered.

Footnotes to

Ch 3: The Spiritual Organism (cont)

ARTICLE III - THE MORAL VIRTUES

1. See Ia IIae, q.63, a.4.
2. Nevertheless these persons, being in the state of grace, do have the infused moral virtues always united to charity, but their attention is not sufficiently focused on them, and they have the corresponding acquired virtues only in a feeble degree.
- to 3. See Ia IIae, q.65, a.2. Thomists generally admit this proposition: "Without charity there can be true acquired moral virtues, but imperfect ones, as there were actually in many peoples." Cf. John of St. Thomas, *Cursus theol.*, De proprietate virtutum, disp. XVII, a. 2, nos. 6, 8, 10, 11, 14. Salmanticenses, *Cursus theol.*, De virtutibus, disp. IV, dub. I, no. I; dub. 2, nos. 26, 27. Billuart, *Cursus theol.*, De passionibus et virtutibus, diss. II, a.4, par. 3, especially *in fine*.

We treated this subject at greater length in the *Revue Thomiste*, July, 1937: "The instability of the acquired moral virtues in the state of mortal sin." Consult in particular St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q.49, a.2 ad 3^{um}; this text is

of primary importance.

4. See Ia IIae, q.65, a.2. In the present state of humanity, every man is either in the state of mortal sin or in the state of grace. Since the Fall, man cannot, in fact, efficaciously love God the Author of his nature more than himself without healing grace, a grace which is not really distinct from sanctifying grace which elevates. Cf. St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q. 109, a.3.

5. Clement V at the Council of Vienne (Denzinger, Enchiridion, no. 483), thus settled this question, which was formulated under Innocent III (Denzinger, no. 410): "Whether faith, charity, and the other virtues are infused into children in baptism." He answers: "We, however, considering the general efficacy of the death of Christ, which is applied by baptism equally to all the baptized, think that, with the approval of the sacred Council, we should choose as more probable and more consonant and harmonious with the teachings of the saints and of modern doctors of theology, the second opinion, which declares that informing grace and the virtues are bestowed in baptism on infants as well as adults." By these words, "and the virtues," Clement V means not only the theological virtues, but the moral virtues, for they also were involved in the question formulated under Innocent III.

6. See Ia IIae, q.63, a.3.

7. Ibid., a.4.

8. Ibid.

9. See I Cor. 9:27.

10. Eph. 2:19.

11. See Ia IIae, q.65, a. 3.

12. Cf. St. Thomas, *Quaest. disp.*: De virtutibus in communi, a. 10, in corp., ad 1^{um}, ad 13^{um}, ad 16^{um}; also P. Bernard, O.P., *La vie spirituelle*, January, 1935; suppl., pp. 25-54: "La vertu acquise et la vertu infuse."

13. Hence it follows that this penitent has through experience a much greater knowledge of the obstacles to be conquered than of the infused virtue of temperance, which he has just received, and which is of too elevated an order to fall under the scope of sensible experience.

14. Infused temperance can exist without acquired temperance, as in the case we have just discussed. And inversely, acquired temperance can exist without the infused virtue, for the latter is lost after every mortal sin, whereas acquired temperance remains at least in an imperfect state (*in statu dispositionis facile mobilis*) if it existed before this sin. Thus the sensible memory, which is at the service of intellectual knowledge, can exist without it; inversely, a great scholar, preserving his knowledge in his intellect, can, by reason of a cerebral lesion, lose his memory which facilitated the exercise of this knowledge.

15. In the just man, charity commands or inspires the act of acquired temperance by the intermediary of the simultaneous act of infused temperance. And even outside the production of their acts, since these two virtues are united in the same faculty, the infused confirms the acquired. Only in those Christians who live a more supernatural life, does the supernatural motive most appear as the explicit motive of acting; in others it is a rational motive, and the supernatural remains somewhat latent (*remissus*). Similarly, one pianist may show great technique and a modicum of inspiration, whereas in another the inverse may be true. The motives of inferior reason, which touch on health, are more or less explicit according as a person is more or less freed

from these preoccupations, or according as he is so healthy that he need not think of his health.

16. See *Ia IIae*, q.81.

17. See *III* q.85.

18. See *Ia IIae*, q. 157.

19. *Ibid.*, q. 151, 152.

20. *Ibid.*, q. 161.

21. *Jas.* 4:6.

22. *Matt.* II: 19.

23. See *Ia IIae*, q.66, a.2. These virtues grow together with charity because of their connection with this virtue, just as the different parts of our physical organism grow simultaneously. But the infused moral virtues grow especially with charity. The acquired virtues may not develop as much if they are not sufficiently exercised.
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