

Premotion, Holiness, and Pope Benedict XIII (1724–30): Some Historical Retrospects on *Veritatis Splendor*

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Christian morality consists, in the simplicity of the Gospel, in *following Jesus Christ*, in abandoning oneself to him, in letting oneself be transformed by his grace and renewed by his mercy, gifts which come to us in the living communion of his Church.

—*Veritatis Splendor*, §119

Introduction

DOING THEOLOGY, as Father Matthew Lamb never tires of reminding us, requires conversion of life. The “Conversion Principle” (to give it a name) finds verification within the pages of the New Testament. Saint Paul identifies mature Christian witness as “speaking the truth in love” (Eph 4:15). More proximately, we find the principle brilliantly illuminated in the life of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux (†1153). One of his best known modern interpreters, Dom Jean Leclercq, describes succinctly how Saint Bernard envisioned the “Conversion Principle” at work in those who take up the burden of theology: “Just as there is no theology without moral life and asceticism, so there is no theology without prayer.”¹ One indeed may inquire why, today, so many theologians ignore the time-honored “Conversion Principle.” After all, the practice it stipulates has

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¹ Jean Leclercq, O.S.B., *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, trans. Catherine Misrahi (New York: Fordham University Press, 1974), 7.

guided theologians from Justin Martyr (†165) to Father Garrigou-Lagrange (†1964).² No easy answer to this question exists. One clue to the answer runs something like this: theologians no longer observe the “Conversion Principle” because they have grown tired of seeking conversion. Why would someone grow tired of prayer, asceticism, and, in some cases, aspects of the moral life? The answer may lie in the manner in which such persons attempt prayer, asceticism (which may include the discipline of study), and a life of virtue.³ Those who seek to sustain themselves spiritually by relying on their own energies always grow weary of conversion. Sound Catholic theology, such as one finds set forth in the 1993 Encyclical Letter of Blessed John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor*, holds out a quite different approach to persevering in conversion of life.⁴ I will

² For information on Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., see his *The One God: A Commentary on the First Part of St. Thomas' Theological Summa* (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder Book Co., 1943), 26–37: “When the priest’s interior life is one of great and solid piety, his theology is always more rigorous. After this theologian has made the descent from faith for the purpose of acquiring theological knowledge by the discussion of particular questions, he desires to return to the source, namely, to ascend from the theological knowledge thus acquired by the discussion of particular questions to the lofty peak of faith. The theologian is like a man who is born on the top of a mountain, for instance, Monte Cassino, and who afterward descends into the valley to acquire an accurate knowledge of individual things. Finally this man wishes to return to his lofty abode, that he may contemplate the whole valley from on high and in a single glance” (35). No doubt the life and example of St. Thomas Aquinas inspired this beautiful image to describe the theologian. Garrigou-Lagrange earlier notes: “There is often too great a separation between study and the interior life; we do not find sufficiently observed, that beautiful gradation spoken of by St. Benedict which consists in: reading, cogitation, study, meditation, prayer and contemplation. St. Thomas, who received his first education from the Benedictines, retained this wonderful gradation when speaking of the contemplative life” (31). The author’s comparison of the theologian on the mountain, who descends into the valley and returns to the mountain, puts one in mind Aquinas’s comparison in *Summa theologiae* I, q. 14, a. 13, ad 3 regarding God’s eternity versus time.

³ For the ascetical character of study, see Garrigou-Lagrange, *The One God*: “Our interior life is in many ways benefitted by good study; and the choicest fruit of penance is to be found in the arduousness of study. It is a fruit much more precious than the natural pleasure to be found in study that may consist in intellectual labor not sufficiently sanctified or directed to God. In diligent study that is commanded by charity, we find pre-eminently verified the common saying: If the roots of knowledge are bitter, its fruits are the sweetest and best. We are not considering here the knowledge that inflates, but that which, under the influence of charity and of the virtue of studiousness, is truly upbuilding” (33).

⁴ See the 1993 Encyclical Letter of the Supreme Pontiff Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* Regarding Certain Fundamental Questions of the Church’s Moral Teaching.

discuss this approach to holiness by talking about “Promotion, Holiness, and Pope Benedict XIII.”

Put simply, this essay to mark the twentieth anniversary of the above-mentioned encyclical discusses how God makes us saints. In other words, I want to explicate how we can sustain the demands of Christian life and witness, and so, whether we do theology or not, merit the reward of everlasting life. The mention of the eighteenth-century Pope Benedict, Pietro Francesco Orsini (1649–1730), signals that I take up the discussion of promotive holiness within the context of the post-Reformation debates on human freedom and divine grace, whose written records fill volumes. This Dominican Pope’s reign (29 May 1724–21 February 1730) witnessed in 1728 the submission by the Archbishop of Paris to the last of the major anti-Jansenist papal condemnations, the 1713 bull *Unigenitus*. This prelate, Cardinal Louis-Antoine de Noailles (1651–1729), remained deeply attached to the ancient prerogatives of the Church in France.⁵ Benedict XIII’s reign was important for another reason. Throughout the high period of the Jansenist struggles, Dominicans were on guard to ensure that the papal condemnations of Jansenist distortions were not interpreted as extending to Thomist theses about grace and freedom. Benedict XIII approved these efforts of his Dominican brethren. The precious clarifications that the defenders of Thomist orthodoxy produced also shaped what—for lack of a better expression—I refer to as the “spirituality” of physical promotion. We are talking about the blueprint for salvation.

Recently, Father Robert Barron and Professor Ralph Martin exchanged views about the divine plan for salvation.⁶ The different viewpoints of these two Catholic thinkers reveal that theologians and priests still struggle to discover the right way to encourage people toward conversion. The present essay does not address directly the question, “Will Many Be Saved?” Rather, I hope to indicate how the Thomist doctrine of physical promotion works in conjunction with a teleology of beatitude, which supplies the theoretical backbone for *Veritatis Splendor*.⁷ At the same time, it goes without saying that those who observe the “spirituality” of physical promotion discover that the question “Will Many Be Saved?” need not trouble them. To be sure, the question of who will be saved vexed the Jansenists. One of

⁵ Jansenism and *Unigenitus* in particular have been the object of many books by the renowned scholar Lucien Ceyssens, O.F.M. For further information on the life and work of Ceyssens, see Jörgen Vijgen, “Lucien Ceyssens OFM,” *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon* 24 (2005): 443–45.

⁶ See the following web pages for details: www.catholicnewsagency.com/column.php?n=2383; www.renewalministries.net/wordpress/?p=348.

⁷ For an introduction to “promotion,” see note 43, *infra*.

their number described Father Matteo Ricci, the Jesuit missionary to China, as a “faithful servant of the Devil, who fortified his dominion over the infidels instead of destroying it.”⁸ Today, few Christians, I suppose, would locate the *massa damnata* in China. Getting salvation right, however, remains important. Until Catholics discover how the dynamics between divine grace and human freedom work both according to God’s plan and unto the sanctification of the human person, one may not, I submit, expect a worldwide renewal of Catholic theology. Father Lamb is correct: doing theology requires conversion of life, or as *Veritatis Splendor* puts it, “a continuous conversion to what is true and to what is good.”⁹

Premotion

The late Dominican historian Father Guy Bedouelle published, among his last books in English, a small volume titled *The Reform of Catholicism, 1480–1620*.¹⁰ With some approximation, the dates point, respectively, to the coming-of-age of Girolamo Savonarola, O.P. (1452–98) and to the death of Saint Francis DeSales (1622). As the title indicates, Father Bedouelle prefers to describe the events that surround the Council of Trent as exercises in reform instead of reaction. He eases away from presenting the post-Tridentine period as a time of Counter-Reformation. What is more important, Bedouelle argues that the unquestionable success of the Tridentine reforms derives not from the Council’s dogmatic definitions and decrees alone, but from “the joint, complementary consideration and articulation of the dogmatic and disciplinary decrees.”¹¹ In other words, the sixteenth-century Council’s defense of Catholic doctrine, drawn mainly from the works of Saint Thomas Aquinas, proceeded both to inform and to shape the Catholic world. This renewal, however, occurred under the impulsion of the disciplinary reforms, which themselves found enthusiastic supporters in saintly figures like Charles Borromeo (†1584), Pope Pius V (†1572), Teresa of Avila (†1582), Robert Bellarmine (†1621), and Francis DeSales (†1622).

Make no mistake. Father Bedouelle does not undervalue the theological achievement of the Council of Trent. “If the humanists—beginning with Erasmus—,” he writes, “had had their way, the different Churches would have been able to be reconciled and to agree on a minimalist Credo,

⁸ See J. H. Crehan, “Jansenism,” in *A Catholic Dictionary of Theology* (1971), 3:147.

⁹ *Veritatis Splendor*, §64.

¹⁰ Father Guy Bedouelle, *The Reform of Catholicism, 1480–1620*, trans. James K. Farge (Toronto: PIMS, 2008).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

a *via media* independent of the subtleties of scholastic theology.”¹² Anyone who casts a glance onto the dogmatic decrees of the Council of Trent realizes that the Fathers do not choose the path of compromise, accommodation, and false irenicism. Trent rather enacted *ante nomen* the principle of reform and continuity that, in our own day, Pope Benedict XVI stipulated for the Church’s proper reading of the documents of the Second Vatican Council.¹³ Still, as Bedouelle goes on to observe, “despite its will and its attempts to be prudent, the Council of Trent issued many rather dense texts which, inevitably open to interpretation, already contained, from the very time they were approved, the seeds of future quarrels.”¹⁴

Within twenty years of the close of the Council of Trent, one such quarrel arose in Spain when, in the school year 1581–82, at Salamanca, a now celebrated Dominican, Domingo Bañez (1528–1604), took issue with certain theses on grace and freedom advanced by a Jesuit theologian, Father Prudencio de Montemaior (†1599). As the name of the papal commission established to resolve the disputes that subsequently developed suggests, the *Congregatio de Auxiliis* debate turns on the question of how to interpret human freedom within the context of the divine helps (*auxilia*) that make choosing unto salvation possible. Father Bedouelle observes that “the quarrel *de auxiliis* between Dominicans and Jesuits, which was not resolved but only postponed by a 1607 papal order that chose neither side, was only the prelude to the even greater theological debates between Catholics of the seventeenth century.”¹⁵ He points of course to the Jansenist controversies that found their most eminent expressions in the elegant, controlled aesthetic developed by certain great figures of French classicism: Blaise Pascal (1623–62), Jean-Baptiste Molière (1622–77), Jean Racine (1639–99), Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet (1627–1704), François de Salignac de la Mothe Fénelon (1651–1715). As the diverse métiers of these eminent personages suggest, “Jansenism was a complex phenomenon with a long gestation.”¹⁶

No attempt to analyze completely the “complex phenomenon” can be undertaken at this juncture in the exposition. Suffice it to remark that Jansenism arose in reaction to the ethos that the Jesuit thinker and writer Luis de Molina (1535–1600) established by his innovative accounts of the interplay between human freedom and divine grace. Molina’s *Concordia*,

¹² Ibid., 135.

¹³ For further explanation, see *Vatican II: Renewal within Tradition*, ed. Matthew L. Lamb and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

¹⁴ Bedouelle, *Reform*, 135.

¹⁵ Ibid., 136.

¹⁶ Thomas O’Connor, *Irish Jansenists, 1600–70: Religion and Politics in Flanders, France, Ireland, and Rome* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2008), 20.

first published in Lisbon in 1588—three years after the birth of Cornelius Jansen (1585–1638), from whom Jansenism takes its name—supplied the anthropological and psychological supports for the moral theology that Molina’s Jesuit confrères had been developing since the middle of the sixteenth century.¹⁷ Emblematic of the new moral theology is the Jesuit father whom Saint Alphonsus Ligouri praised as a “moderate Probabiliorist,” Juan Azor (1535–1603), who started his teaching in 1568.¹⁸ Azor’s three-volume manual of moral theology was published in Rome from 1600 to 1611 under the title *Institutiones Moralium, in quibus universae quaestiones ad conscientiam recte aut prave factorum pertinentes breviter tractantur*. Juan Azor’s professional career as a moral theologian represents the start of the innovative moral systems that dominated the post-Tridentine period. What is important to remember about the period of post-Tridentine casuistry that directed Catholic life for nearly 400 years is easy to summarize.¹⁹ First, the practice of this case-based moral analysis came to a screeching (though unpublicized) end about fifty years ago. Second, one finds the replacement model for the casuist categories in *Veritatis Splendor*, whose twentieth anniversary we commemorated in 2013 on the feast of the Transfiguration (6 August).²⁰

When I refer to a Molinist ethos, I mean the typically modern temptation to safeguard the autonomy of human freedom by detaching it from the divine motion that “moves” all created things that exist.²¹ As the Book of Wisdom sets it forth: “For Wisdom is mobile beyond all motion, and she penetrates and pervades all things by reason of her purity” (Wis 7:24). In his *Summa theologiae*, Saint Thomas Aquinas explains how the divine wisdom “is mobile” without compromising God’s unchangeable-

¹⁷ Elsewhere I argue that Molinism flows naturally, if one will, from the form of life that the Jesuits undertook, and from the way in which they separated religious and professional occupations. See my “Molina and Aquinas,” *Brill’s Companion to Molina*, ed. Matthias Kaufmann and Alexander Aichele (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

¹⁸ See Arthur McCaffray, “Juan Azor,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 2 (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907). For further background information on the Jesuit moralist, see A. F. Dziuba, “Juan Azor, S.J., teólogo moralista del siglo XVI–XVII,” *Archivo Teológico Granadino* 59 (1996): 145–55.

¹⁹ One may conveniently mark the span from 1568 to 1968, the publication of the encyclical letter *Humanae Vitae*, as the years of casuist moral theology.

²⁰ For my remarks on the tenth anniversary, see “Walk According to the Light: An Illustration from North America,” in *Camminare nella Luce. Prospettive della teologia morale a partire da ‘Veritatis splendor,’* ed. Livio Melina and José Noriega (Rome: Lateran University Press, 2004), 401–7.

²¹ *Veritatis Splendor* observes: “The modern concern for the claims of autonomy has not failed to exercise an influence also in the sphere of Catholic moral theology” (36).

ness: "To call wisdom mobile," he writes, "is a metaphorical way of saying that wisdom spreads its own likeness throughout the length and breadth of things. For nothing can exist except it be a sort of reflection (*imitationem*) deriving from God's wisdom as from its primary operative and formal cause; just as works of handicraft derive from craftsmanship. . . . It is as though we talked of the sun sallying forth on the earth when light-rays touched earth."²² To adapt this "sun metaphor" to the Jesuit-sponsored ethos, Luis de Molina considered it necessary to introduce an eclipse of the sun when rendering an account of the concordance between the divine motion and the human will. The position represents a typically modern ethos inasmuch as his followers, when giving an account of the interplay between divine grace and human freedom, deem this eclipse of the divine sun's rays a non-negotiable element in the equation. How else to preserve, they ask, what moderns construe as the autonomy of human freedom? Molina's critics—at the start, mainly Dominicans—made another analysis. They found Molina's schema to embody a recrudescence of ancient errors about divine grace and human freedom that imposed the burden of growing holy squarely on the putative good will of the human creature. Leszek Kolakowski, in his book *God Owes Us Nothing*, provides a more precise identification. Molina's critics found his position a form of "brazen, modern Pelagianism."²³ Pope Paul V forbade Jesuits and Dominicans from speaking "more severe words" about each other,²⁴ so I leave things with Kolakowski's analysis.

Veritatis Splendor addresses mistakes that moderns still make about human freedom. The encyclical puts it simply: "*the autonomy of reason cannot mean that reason itself creates values and moral norms*. Were this autonomy to imply a denial of the participation of the practical reason in the wisdom of the divine Creator and Lawgiver, or were it to suggest a freedom which creates moral norms, on the basis of historical contingencies or the diversity of societies and cultures, this sort of alleged autonomy would contradict the Church's teaching on the truth about man."²⁵ It should be noted that the Pope says that a wrong understanding of autonomy results from separating the human creature from the divine wisdom. The participation of the practical reason in the divine wisdom, which

²² *ST I*, q. 9, a. 2, ad 2.

²³ Leszek Kolakowski, *God Owes Us Nothing: A Brief Remark on Pascal's Religion and on the Spirit of Jansenism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 7.

²⁴ Denzinger-Schönmetzer, *Enchiridion Symbolorum Definitionum et Declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*, ed. XXXVI (DS), 1997: "Quin optat etiam, ut verbis asperioribus amaritiem animi significantibus invicem abstineant."

²⁵ *Veritatis Splendor*, §40.

participation does not suffer rupture even in the sinner, forms the basis for premotive holiness. For the reason I mentioned above, a Dominican may not claim that this papal text puts the final nail in the coffin of sixteenth-century Molinism. Still, this twentieth-century magisterial text makes it clear that the sun of the divine wisdom suffers no eclipse when it informs the human conscience about how to act. The encyclical, moreover, expresses its pleasure with the theological practice of referring to human freedom as a “*participated theonomy*, since,” as the Pope insists, “man’s free obedience to God’s law effectively implies that human reason and human will participate in God’s wisdom and providence.”²⁶ The post-Vatican II papal magisterium differs in its expression from that of the early modern period. As Father Bedouelle has reminded us, the post-Tridentine popes ruled largely through disciplinary canons, which for the most part, as *Denzinger-Schönmetzer* amply illustrates, were confined to correcting errors. Recent popes have provided constructive teaching to support their condemnations.²⁷

²⁶ *Veritatis Splendor*, §41. For a more extended examination of the importance of theonomy in Christian life and thought, see the first chapter of Steven A. Long’s book, *Natura Pura: On the Recovery of Nature in the Doctrine of Grace* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), titled “On the Loss, and the Recovery, of Nature as a Theonomic Principle: Reflections on the Nature/Grace Controversy” (10–51). This is a theme I also explore in my *Introduction to Moral Theology* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2001), 215–18 (rev. ed. 206–8).

²⁷ For this constructive teaching, popes often relied on St. Thomas Aquinas. See Pope John Paul II, who cites the eighteenth-century pope Benedict XIV, to the participants in the 9th International Thomistic Conference on September 29, 1990: “Quanto alla sua funzione di guida negli studi, la Chiesa, nel ribadirla, ha preferito far leva, più che su direttive di indole giuridica, sulla maturità e saggezza di coloro che intendono accostarsi alla parola di Dio con sincero desiderio di scoprire e conoscere sempre più a fondo il suo contenuto, comunicarlo agli altri, specialmente ai giovani affidati al loro insegnamento. A questo proposito, è bene ricordare un aspetto del metodo e del comportamento di san Tommaso, messo in risalto dal mio predecessore Benedetto XIV, quando, nella costituzione apostolica *Sollicita ac provida* del 10 luglio 1753, scriveva che ‘il Principe Angelico delle Scuole . . . ha necessariamente urtato le opinioni dei filosofi e dei teologi, che egli era spinto a confutare in nome della verità, ma ciò che completa mirabilmente i meriti di un sì grande dottore è che non lo si è mai visto disprezzare, ferire o umiliare alcun avversario, ma al contrario li ha trattati tutti con molta bontà e rispetto. In effetti, se le loro parole contenevano qualcosa di duro, di ambiguo, di oscuro, egli l’addolciva e spiegava con una interpretazione indulgente e benevola. Che se la causa della religione e della fede gli imponeva di respingere le loro idee, egli lo faceva con una tale modestia che lo rendeva non meno degno di elogio nel separarsi da essi che nell’affermare la verità cattolica. Coloro che si gloriano di ricorrere a un maestro così eminente—e noi ci rallegriamo che siano molto numerosi, a causa del nostro interesse e della nostra particolarissima venerazione

Ronald Knox places Jansenism among the expressions of “enthusiasm” that from time to time crystallize into movements among Christian believers.²⁸ This episode of enthusiasm was occasioned by the publication (posthumously) in 1640 of Cornelius Jansen’s *Augustinus*, a book that aimed to counter Molinist theology by appeal mainly to patristic citations, especially, as the book’s name indicates, from Saint Augustine. The theological, social, and political dimensions of the Jansenist movement defy, as Jacques Gres-Gayer affirms, “a compact definition because of a conflict-filled history that spans two centuries of major change in European society.”²⁹ At this juncture then, the present discussion takes up a very restricted consideration of the Jansenist debates and intrigues. I refer to the perils that the Jansenist outlook on salvation posed to Thomist orthodoxy and its teaching on how God premotively sanctifies the human creature.

Holiness

We can conclude from what has been said up to this point, at least, that respectable Christian people strongly object to accounts of human autonomy that, shall we say, make the “free” in free choice dependent upon an eclipse of the divine light: Bishop Cornelius Jansen; certain French classicists; many Dominicans—to name a few. Does this mean that in order to embrace an orthodox doctrine of grace and freedom one must adopt the five condemned propositions excerpted or paraphrased from the *Augustinus*? The answer, of course, to this question is clear. Whatever the political wrangling over the papal condemnation of the propositions ascribed to Cornelius Jansen, the fact remains that the five theses over which the 31 May 1653 bull *Cum occasione* of Pope Innocent X first cast a shadow do not express Catholic truth.³⁰ Molinism continued on its merry way. Even saints of the period, like Saint Francis De Sales, found themselves

per lui—si propongano come modello la moderazione di espressione di un tale dottore e il suo modo caritatevole di comportarsi nelle discussioni con gli avversari. Quanto a coloro che non appartengono alla sua scuola, si sforzino di conformarsi anch’essi a questo metodo . . . ? (Benedetto XIV, *Sollicita ac provida*, 24).” See *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, XIII/2 (1990): 768–74. For a related discussion, see Russell Hittinger, “*Pascendi Dominici Gregis* at 100: Two Modernisms, Two Thomisms: Reflections on the Centenary of Pius X’s Letter Against the Modernists,” *Nova et Vetera* 5, no. 4 (2007): 843–80.

²⁸ Ronald A. Knox, *Enthusiasm: A Chapter in the History of Religion, with special reference to the XVII and XVIII Centuries* (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1983), chaps IX–X.

²⁹ J. M. Gres-Gayer, “Jansenism,” *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed. (Detroit Thomson/Gale, 2003), 7: 719.

³⁰ See *DS* 2001–2007. Nos. 2006 and 2007 list the notes levied against the five propositions.

“molinised”—to borrow a term.³¹ The Dominicans, on the other hand, faced a different challenge. They had to show that Thomism was not infected with the same fatal errors as Jansenism. Right-thinking theologians, accordingly, set themselves the task of separating out orthodox Thomists from card-carrying Jansenists. The task proved challenging.

Though what today one may call a *ressourcement* theologian, Cornelius Jansen did not exhibit the anti-Thomist outlook that motivated certain theologians of the pre-Vatican II period.³² “If one wishes,” writes Jansen, “to call the help of Christ ‘physical predetermination,’ though Augustine would not have heard of the expression, that wouldn’t bother me at all. It suffices that the substance of the Doctor of Grace gets handed on.”³³ One may hope that what Saint Augustine himself means by the “help of Christ” does correspond in fact to what Thomists understand by physical premotion.³⁴ Whether, however, what Jansen and the Jansenists took to be the doctrine of Saint Augustine may be identified with the Thomist doctrine on the bestowal of divine grace raises another

³¹ Francis Vincent, “The Spirituality of Saint Francis of Sales,” at www.ewtn.com/library/spirit/salespir.txt. See also A. Schmidt, “Tirez-moi, nous courrons nous deux. Göttliche Gnade und menschliche Mitwirkung in der Theologie des hl. Franz von Sales,” in *Jahrbuch für salesianische Studien* 33 (2001): 7–79. However, see Aidan Nichols, *The Latin Clerk: The Life, Work, and Travels of Adrian Fortescue* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2011), 169: “He [Adrian Fortescue] spent the day before going into the hospital with the Dominicans at Haverstock Hill (‘no Molinism for me, thank you’, he told Myers in what turned out to be the farewell letter—the Jesuit theology of grace was too humanistic for what he called ‘a soul that has no hope but in the mercy of God’).”

³² Jean-Louis Quantin, *Le catholicisme classique et les Pères de l’Église. Un retour aux sources (1669–1713)* (Paris: Institut d’Études Augustiniennes, 1999), chap. 11, examines the relationship between positive theology and Jansenism under the heading: “Nourrir La Ferveur: La Patristique des Dévots.” Gemma Simmonds, “Jansenism: An Early *Ressourcement* Movement?” in *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology*, ed. Gabriel Flynn and Paul D. Murray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 23–35, tries favorably to compare Jansenists and the liberal reformers of the pre- and post-conciliar periods. For a different approach to the place of *ressourcement* in contemporary theology, see my “On the Place of Servais Pinckaers (†7 April 2008) in the Renewal of Catholic Theology,” *The Thomist* 73 (2009): 1–27.

³³ Jansenius, *Augustinus, seu Doctrina S. Augustini de humanae naturae sanitate, aegritudine, medicina, adversus Pelagianos et Massiliensis*, 3 vol. Louvain, 1640, t. iii, l, viii, c. ii, coll 818.

³⁴ Although a nineteenth-century work, J. B. Mozley’s *A Treatise on the Augustinian Doctrine of Predestination* (London: John Murray, 1883), offers an interesting analysis of the Augustinian account of predestination and its role in later scholastic engagements with the question.

question. As we shall note, Pope Benedict XIII surely did not think so. Earlier however, in 1656, Antoine Arnauld (1612–94) argued in a theological treatise for the conformity of Jansenist views on grace and freedom with those of the Thomist Schools.³⁵ Additionally, there arises a methodological question. The *Augustinus* contains a section devoted to the limitations of human reason. Did the difficulties occasioned by the *Augustinus* arise as a result of its author's heavy reliance on what today we would call a "return-to-the-sources" approach?³⁶ "Jansen claimed"—it is interesting to note—"that in order to write the book he had read the entire works of Augustine ten times, and the treatise against the Pelagians thirty times."³⁷ One may be permitted to wonder, however, how much he had read of Aristotle. In any case, Jansen was not a man given to appreciation of the scholastic mode of doing theology.

Bishop Jansen died in 1638, before the movement that bears his name coalesced. Antoine Arnauld's retirement to Port Royal around 1640 may be thought to mark the start of Jansenism as an organized front, whereas the death of Louis XIV in 1715 marks its end, at least as a theological quarrel. The election in 1724 of Pope Benedict XIII, a Dominican, signals a surcease of the decades-long struggle, mainly in France, when many of the

³⁵ See Antoine Arnauld, *Dissertatio theologica in qua Augustiana propositio Defuit Petro gratia sine qua nihil possumus totius Traditionis auctoritate confirmatur, cum uariis Thomisticae Scholae sententiis conciliatur, et a peruulgata de praeceptorum impossibilitate calumnia purgatur* (s.l., 1656). Le Grand Arnauld (to distinguish him from his Jansenist relatives) reveals something of what is noble in the Jansenist character, and he is said later to have developed an authentic appreciation for the Thomist doctrine of efficacious grace.

³⁶ For background, see J. H. Crehan, "Jansenism," in *A Catholic Dictionary of Theology* (London: Nelson, 1971), vol. 3: "Between 1580 and 1620 there had been a great increase in the editing of patristic works; men like Henry Savile and Peltan were followed by Sirmond, Petau. . . . It was therefore in fashion for a theologian to desire a return to the Fathers, while by a reciprocal causality the Jansenist controversy itself stimulated still further research into the Fathers" (147).

³⁷ Cited in New World Encyclopedia: "Cornelius Jansen," *New World Encyclopedia* at www.newworldencyclopedia.org/p/index.php?title=Cornelius_Jansen&oldid=685560 (accessed January 12, 2013).

Crehan, "Jansenism," 146, claims that this "boast" was made originally by the Irish Archbishop, Florence Conroy, O.F.M., (1560–1629), about his own study of Augustine. Conroy, while living in Louvain, was influential on Jansen. Antoine Arnauld, *Apologie de Monsieur Jansenius evesque d'Ipre. & de la doctrine de S. Augustin, expliquée dans son livre, intitulé, Augustinus. Contre trois sermons de Monsieur Habert, theologal de Paris, prononcez dans Nostre-Dame, le premier & le dernier dimanche de l'advent 1642. & le dimanche de la septuagesime 1643, [S.l.] M.DC.XLIV*, p. 8: "Il a leu Saint Augustin dix fois d'un bout à l'autre, & plus de trente fois tous ses ouvrages sur la Grace, & a esclairey avec vn trauail infatigable . . ."

Jansenists tried to present themselves as real Thomists. I will not burden the reader with the perpetual back and forth of these maneuverings. Suffice it to remark that this eighteenth-century pope, in his 28 June 1727 bull *Pretiosus*, “declared that the teaching of St Thomas and the Thomist school had nothing to do with the errors of Cornelius Jansen (1585–1638) and Pasquier Quesnel (1634–1719).”³⁸ Quesnel was the last standard-bearer for the Jansenist movement. The twentieth century is not the first time that seemingly well-meaning people have mistreated the doctrine of Saint Thomas.³⁹ Standard histories of the period do not offer great detail about how the Jansenist theological positions risked compromising the doctrine of Saint Thomas. So one welcomes the 2011 publication of an erudite 555-page work by Sylvio Hermann de Franceschi titled *La Puissance et la Gloire. L’orthodoxie thomiste au péril du jansénisme (1663–1724): le zénith français de la querelle de la grâce*.⁴⁰ It would surprise me to discover that the least detail has escaped this meticulous author’s attention.

One had not, however, to wait until the publication of De Franceschi’s scholarly historical study in order to realize that Thomist views of predestination and freedom do not cast dark shadows over the human creature or make a tyrant of the world’s Creator. Thomism gives no quarter to “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.”⁴¹ Professor Steven A. Long

³⁸ J. N. D. Kelly, *Oxford Dictionary of Popes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 295. See also *The Papacy: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Philippe Levillain, 3 vols. (New York: Routledge, 2002), which is a translation of *Dictionnaire historique de la papauté* (Paris: Fayard, 1994). The article on Benedict XIII (1:165–67) by Luigi Fiorani of the Vatican Library opines: “In fact, the bull *Pretiosus*, drafted by the Inquisition and published in 1727, brought about a stiffening in favor of the positions of the Molinists and a fresh confirmation of the bulls *Unigenitus* and *Pastoralis officii*. With this document, which clearly did not take the pope’s thinking into account, the traditional line of the Curia was reaffirmed, one close to the Molinist positions” (Levillain 1:167). For a late-nineteenth-century take on the topic, see J. Brucker, “Le Bref ‘Demissas Preces’ de Benoit XIII et le Molinisme,” *Études* 50 (1890): 28–53.

³⁹ For discussion of the twentieth-century disruption, see Ralph McInerny, *Praeambula Fidei: Thomism and the God of the Philosophers* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2006), and my review of this book: “Neo-Neo-Thomism” in *First Things* (May 2007): 48–51.

⁴⁰ Sylvio Hermann de Franceschi, *La Puissance et la Gloire. L’orthodoxie thomiste au péril du jansénisme (1663–1724): le zénith français de la querelle de la grâce* (Paris: Nolin, 2011).

⁴¹ “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” a sermon preached by Jonathan Edwards (1703–58) at Enfield, Massachusetts (later Connecticut), July 8, 1741. For the text, see *Jonathan Edwards’s “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”: A Casebook*, ed. Wilson H. Kimmach, Caleb J. D. Maskell, Kenneth P. Minkema (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 33–50.

achieved considerable recognition when the Dominican editor of the venerable *Revue thomiste* invited him to submit for publication in French a paper delivered at an early symposium sponsored by Ave Maria University.⁴² After a suitable interstice, the essay appeared in the author's original and challenging English prose as "Providence, Freedom, and Natural Law."⁴³ Two texts supply the epigraph. The first comes from the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*: "Not only does God protect and govern all things by His Providence, but He also by an internal power impels to motion and action whatever moves and acts, and this in such a manner that, although He excludes not, He yet precedes the agency of secondary causes."⁴⁴ The second comes from the catechism published after the Second Vatican Council:

The truth that God is at work in all the actions of his creatures is inseparable from faith in God the Creator. God is the first cause who operates in and through secondary causes: "For God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure." Far from diminishing the creature's dignity, this truth enhances it. Drawn from nothingness by God's power, wisdom and goodness, it can do nothing if it is cut off from its origin, for "without a Creator the creature vanishes." Still less can a creature attain its ultimate end without the help of God's grace.⁴⁵

The two texts rely on the philosophical notion of secondary causes. One may only infer that it is impossible to understand the relationship of divine action and human freedom without recognizing that the omnipotent God and the free human creature stand in a relationship that is best conceived as one of First Cause to secondary cause. Given a moment's reflection, we see that no other arrangement is possible. God cannot act in half measures. This is the mistake that Luis de Molina had made and which launched the

⁴² See Steven A. Long, "Providence, Liberté et Loi Naturelle," trans. Hyacinthe Defos du Rau, O.P., and Serge-Thomas Bonino, O.P., *Revue thomiste*, no. 3 (2002): 355–406.

⁴³ Steven A. Long, *Nova et Vetera* 4, no. 3 (2006): 1–55. The author gives a short account of physical premotion: "There is a motion bestowed by God without which the rational creature cannot proceed to its act of self-determination. This motion is 'prior'—hence 'pre' motion—not in a temporal sense, but in the sense in which the cause is prior to that which is caused: apart from this moving of the rational creature from potency to act with respect to its act of self-determination there can be no such act. But of course, in time, the motion is simultaneous with the activation of the power of self-determination. It is 'physical' not in the sense of being a material thing, but in the sense of being real. And of course its character as a motion has been noted" (11).

⁴⁴ *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, Article One.

⁴⁵ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 308.

thousand ships of Jansenism, whose captains in fact set out to squelch secondary causes in a vain effort to leave untouched the dreadful sovereignty of God. Molina's divinity acts partially. For, in order to safeguard human freedom, Molina had to introduce a phase—the eclipse—wherein the human will is left unencumbered, so to speak, to take some initiative. This view of the cooperation between God and man results in thinking about God and man as two partial co-causes, like—to use Molina's own pellucid image—"two men rowing a boat."⁴⁶ It is not difficult to sympathize with those devout Christians who recoiled from the conception of Christian life that such imagery evokes. Given the challenges that confront us throughout a lifetime of living according to all that God commands of his holy ones—remember prayer, asceticism (which may include study), and the virtuous life, who would relish the thought of responding to the gift of grace on one's own naked initiative? Consider any temptation that may occur in our lives. Which among us would cry out, "Thank you God for eclipsing your sun's ray so that I may experience myself as truly free?" The more parlous question concerns what happens to those who do espouse this brand of "spirituality."

The Molinist duel ended, as Father Bedouelle has observed, in a draw. Jansenism drew condemnation. Mostly in France, Dominicans toiled to produce treatises that explained why the accepted theses of the Thomist school on predestination, grace, and freedom, and the overall salvific purpose of Christ's death on the cross should not be confused with Jansenist distortions of Catholic doctrine. The Provençal Dominican Jean Baptiste Gonet (†1681) illustrates the battle that the Thomists of the period mounted in order to distinguish the teaching of Saint Thomas Aquinas from the teaching of Calvin and that of Jansen.⁴⁷ The best illustration of his copious efforts occupies the pages of his celebrated *Clypeus theologiae thomisticae contra novos ejus impugnatores*, which saw many editions after its *princeps* edition published at Bordeaux between the years 1659 and 1669. Gonet takes up the theological style of the Thomist tradition that one of his Provençal confreres, John Capreolus (c.1380–1444), had initiated two centuries earlier. Capreolus and Gonet, in a word, were

⁴⁶ See Molina, *Concordia*, q. 14, art. 13, disp. 25, ed. Rabeneck: "Ordo agentium respondet ordini finium. Sed unius rei non possunt esse duo fines immediati et perfecti. Ergo neque esse possunt duo agentia, nisi forte supplerent vicem unius agentis perfecti; quo pacto duo trahentes navem efficiunt unum agens integrum ac sufficiens et perfectum; et eodem modo ejusdem rei possunt etiam esse plures fines parciales."

⁴⁷ For background information, see B. Peyrous, "Un grand centre de thomisme au XVII^e siècle. Le couvent des Frères Prêcheurs de Bordeaux et l'enseignement de J.-B. Gonet," *Divus Thomas* (Pl.) 77 (1974): 452–73.

about argument, not catenae. Gonet requires only two half-page columns of his *Clypeus* to explain why the Jansenist theses condemned in 1653 by Innocent X do not represent the teaching of Saint Thomas Aquinas.⁴⁸

The first condemned proposition (which is the only one taken verbatim from the *Augustinus*) expresses a pessimistic view of human nature and its capacities. The proposition holds that some divine precepts are impossible for men to keep. The spirituality of premotive holiness does not proceed under the promise of failure. The cardinal principle of Aquinas's blueprint for holiness is that God loves us because He is good, not because we are.⁴⁹ In other words, the divine goodness governs the bestowal of the divine help. In fact, when Aquinas explains why despair is a vice he points out that the person who despairs of doing God's will fails to embrace the divine omnipotence and the divine mercy. God can save us. God does forgive. The worst thing that can happen in the Christian life is for a Christian to become convinced that virtue is impossible. This persuasion leads not to holiness but to sin, specifically a sin against hope, whose motivating force comes from the propriety of seeking divine goodness.⁵⁰ *Mihi sed non propter me*, underscores Cardinal Cajetan.⁵¹ I refer the divine goodness to myself, but I do not subordinate God to my own purposes. The Jansenists ignored this distinction, and so they concluded that despair, not hope, supplies the default position for the human being. However, one does not require espousing Jansenist rigorism to conclude that divine help is not forthcoming and that the divine mercy does not embrace me. Many moral laxists secretly succumb to the same despair, although they usually disguise it with rationalization and bravado.

The second condemned proposition privileges "interior grace" to the point of making this grace irresistible to fallen human nature. This thesis describes the physical demolition, not premotion, of the will. Aquinas, on the other hand, recognizes both that we can resist the gift of divine grace and that the grace of the new dispensation does not confirm a man in holiness: "The grace of the New Covenant," he writes, "although it helps man not to sin, does not confirm him in good in such a way that he cannot sin: this belongs to the state of glory."⁵² Justification, in other words, does not imply impeccability.⁵³ The spirituality of premotion finds its underpinnings

⁴⁸ See the Appendix to this essay for Gonet's *Clypeus Theologiae Thomisticae*.

⁴⁹ For one reference to Aquinas, see *ST* I, q. 20, a. 2.

⁵⁰ See *ST* II-II, q. 20, a. 3.

⁵¹ Thomas de Vio, Cardinal Cajetan (1469–1534), *In Ilam-IIae*, q. 17, a. 5, no. 8.

⁵² *ST* I-II, q. 106, a. 2, ad 2.

⁵³ Steven A. Long in a personal communication in January 2013 offers this observation: "It is also difficult [to explain] that the divine permission does not

and pinnacles in the practice of the theological virtues—what the French call *la vie théologique*.⁵⁴ The life of grace and the virtues establishes the Christian in a right tension that avoids, on the one hand, the uptight rigidity generated by lofty moralism enforced by servile fear and, on the other hand, the callous nonchalance inculcated by disregard of the divine law and by presumption on God's mercy. Within the constellation of virtues that premitive holiness encourages, theological hope ensures that Christian life proceeds within the proper dynamism of grace and freedom.

The third proposition takes the freedom out of merit, and so reduces the Christian believer to a mechanical robot programmed for heaven or hell: "In order to merit or demerit in the state of fallen nature," so Jansenists held, "freedom from necessity is not required in man, but freedom from external compulsion is sufficient."⁵⁵ The Jansenists fail to distinguish between freedom with respect to exercise (*quoad exercitium*) and the freedom of specification. With what the whole Christian tradition teaches about everyday holiness, Aquinas places freedom of specification (*quoad specificationem*)—freedom with respect to a sort of action—at the heart of our meriting and demeriting. That the good actions Christians perform reflect the spirituality of premitive holds more interest for Christian theology than a merely human consideration of the freedom with which they perform them. To relate this element of Thomist doctrine to what is taught explicitly in *Veritatis Splendor*, premitive spirituality focuses on teleology: "The primary and decisive element for moral judgment is the object of the human act, which establishes whether it is *capable of being ordered to the good and to the ultimate end, which is God*. . . . These are the goods safeguarded by the commandments, which, according to Saint Thomas, contain the whole natural law (see *ST* I–II, q. 100, a. 1)."⁵⁶ Thomists do not fuss over freedom. They, with the Church, focus on distinguishing the good from the bad. That is, on what perfects and on what detracts from the truth about the good of the

imply merely libertarian indifference but the non-upholding in good (i.e., for God to permit the defect is for Him not to cause the contrary; granted, He does not owe it to the creature in justice to cause the contrary, a point missed by virtually all the customary naysayers of the tradition, who always suppose that God owes the defectible creature to preserve it from all defect). Greater good is given to all than they can possibly merit absolutely speaking; and lesser penalty is bestowed to those penalized than they actually deserve. But it is a very profound mystery . . ."

⁵⁴ For further information, see my *Christian Faith and the Theological Life* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996).

⁵⁵ DS 2003, trans. Denzinger, *The Sources of Catholic Dogma* (St. Louis: Herder, 1957).

⁵⁶ *Veritatis Splendor*, §79.

human person. Herein lies the nub of the reason for the conflicts, mainly carried on between Dominican and Jesuit moralists, that issued in the two casuist schools of Probabilism and Probabiliorism. Probabilism favored maximizing freedom of choice within the law. Probabiliorists kept their focus on the choice of the perfective good. Within the casuist systems, Probabilists were content to follow the advice of a few, whereas Probabiliorists—committed to the “more probable” course of action—sought a broad consensus about what (to use the parlance of the period) is permitted or forbidden.⁵⁷ Jesuits mainly leaned toward Probabilism, whereas Dominicans, for the most part, held to Probabiliorism.⁵⁸

The fourth proposition concerns the freedom of the will before the grace called sufficient. Jansenists regard talk of sufficient grace as Semi-pelagian. As Pascal observes in *The Provincial Letters*, Thomists speak in a qualified way about sufficient grace.⁵⁹ Grace, since it comes from an omnipotent God, they correctly prefer to stress as efficacious. After the Jansenist condemnations, however, Thomists honed their view of sufficient grace.⁶⁰ Gonet offers an insightful reply to the fourth proposition by citing Aquinas’s first Quodlibetal Question: “God moves everything according to its manner. So divine motion is imparted to some things with necessity; however, it is imparted to the rational creature with liberty because the rational power is related to opposites. God so moves

⁵⁷ See Romanus Cessario, O.P. “Casuistry and Revisionism: Structural Similarities in Method and Content,” in *“Humanae Vitae”: 20 Anni Dopo. Atti del II Congresso Internazionale di Theologia Morale*, vol. III (Milan: Edizioni Ares, 1990), 385–409.

⁵⁸ As the above reference to Saint Alphonsus makes clear, no hard-and-fast rule can be applied.

⁵⁹ Blaise Pascal, *The Provincial Letters*, trans. A. J. Krailsheimer (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1967), 49: “We [Dominicans] would all sooner suffer martyrdom,’ said the Father, ‘than consent to the establishment of *sufficient grace in the Jesuits’ sense*, for St. Thomas, whom we vow to follow to the death, is directly opposed to it.’”

⁶⁰ Steven A. Long explains the divine movement in the sinner in this way: “The issue wholly reposes on what is meant by ‘resistance’ or ‘refusal’ to grace. Insofar as the sinful act has any being or good, these derive from and are caused by God (as Thomas makes clear in *De malo*); but the resistance to grace itself is a function of the defectibility of the creature, and if we mean full blown resistance/refusal, this is not a simple negation, but a deprivation, i.e., a privation of something that is owing or due or necessary for the perfection of the subject. It is true that such deprivation presupposes some prior negation, but it is only when the moral agent does not advert to, and conform his action to, the rule of reason and charity, that an action is subject to deprivation and moral evil. By contrast, the simple negation of consideration is consistent with there being no act whatsoever. . . . Lastly, of course, God must permit such resistance if it occurs, but He is not bound or obligated in justice to preserve the defectible creature from all defect.”

the human mind to the good, however, that a man can resist this motion.”⁶¹ Garrigou-Lagrange summarizes the accepted teaching with help from the “Eagle of Meaux,” Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet:

In sufficient grace, efficacious grace is offered to us, as the fruit is in the flower; but if resistance is made on account of our defectibility, then we deserve not to receive efficacious grace. For this reason Bossuet declares: “Our intellect must be held captive before the obscurity of the divine mystery and admit two graces (sufficient and efficacious) of which the former leaves our will without any excuse before God, and the latter does not permit the will to glory in itself” (*Œuvres complètes*, Paris, 1845, I, 644).⁶²

When one ponders the divine omnipotence and the divine mercy, it becomes evident that the Thomist double insistencies on the efficaciousness of the divine gift and the creature’s potential sinful refusal of it create an optimistic view of salvation. The questions, “How many are saved?” or “Am I saved?” never trouble the practitioner of premotive holiness. Only one question remains for the person who lives by the divine premotion: “At this moment, do I unite myself with the saving grace that God efficaciously offers me?” If so, whether the grace comes as an operative or a cooperative one, at that moment my salvation is assured.⁶³ Only the delusional try to travel north and south at the same time.

The fifth proposition considers it heretical to say that Christ died for all men. In reply, Gonet cites the *Summa contra Gentiles*: “As far as He is concerned, God is ready to give grace to all; ‘indeed He wills all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth,’ as is said in 1 Timothy (2:4).” Aquinas continues, “But those alone are deprived of grace who offer an obstacle within themselves to grace; just as, while the sun is shining on the world, the man who keeps his eyes closed is held responsible for his fault, if as a result some evil follows, even though he could not see unless he were provided in advance with light from the sun.”⁶⁴ This text,

⁶¹ Gonet cites the text “quod lib.1. art. 7. ad 2.” Modern editions make it *Quodlibetal Question* 1, q. 4, art. 2, ad 2, trans. Sandra Edwards (Toronto: PIMS, 1983), 46.

⁶² Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *Grace: Commentary on the Summa Theologica of St. Thomas*, trans. Dominican Nuns, Corpus Christi Monastery (St. Louis, MO: Herder Book Co., 1952), chap. 5; also at www.ewtn.com/library/Theology/grace5.htm#_ftn8

⁶³ The doctrine of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux (1873–97) offers a practical application of this Thomist principle. See, for instance, Vernon Johnson, *Spiritual Childhood: The Spirituality of St. Thérèse of Lisieux* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2001).

⁶⁴ *Summa contra Gentiles*, Bk III, Part II, chap. 159, trans. Vernon J. Bourke (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), 261.

which affirms Catholic teaching that “God freely wills to communicate the glory of his blessed life,” brings us back to the metaphor of the sun and its rays.⁶⁵ For according to the premotive holiness that follows upon the principles of Saint Thomas Aquinas, the sun represents the warmth of the divine love that preveniently anticipates our every need. How differently emerges the portrayal of the sun in the French classical tragedy *Phaedra*, whose author, Jean Racine, also wrote a history of Port Royal, the Parisian Jansenist convent. Racine put these words on the lips of Phaedra: “Do I yet live, wretch that I am, and dare / To face this holy Sun from whom I spring? / My father’s sire was king of all the gods; / My ancestors fill all the universe. / Where can I hide? In the dark realms of Pluto?”⁶⁶ Pluto, of course, holds sway in a place of perpetual eclipse.⁶⁷

Appendix

Jean Baptiste Gonet, O.P., *Clypeus Theologiae Thomisticae*, Vol. 1 (Paris: Vivès, 1875), tract. 3, disp. 6, art. 10, pp. 583–84: *Quinque propositiones a Summo Pontifice Innocentio X. damnatae, juxta doctrinam D. Thomae.*

CXL. *Propositio I. Aliqua Dei praecepta hominibus justis, volentibus, et conantibus, secundum praesentes quas habent vires, sunt impossibilia; deest quoque illis gratia, qua possibilia fiant.*

D. Thomas qu. 24. de verit, art. 14. ad 1. “Illud quod praecipit Deus, NON EST IMPOSSIBILE HOMINI AD SERVANDUM.” Quodlibeto 2. art. 6. “Nullus tenetur ad hoc quod est supra vires suas, nisi per modum quo FIT SIBI POSSIBILE.” In 2. dist. 28. art. 3. in 1. argumento sed contra, “Hieronymus ait, Qui Deum dicit PRAECIPERE IMPOSSIBILIA, anathema sit.” Et in 2. argumento. “Deus non est magis crudelis quam homo: sed homini imputatur in crudelitatem, si obliget aliquem per praeceptum, AD ID QUOD IMPLERE NON POTEST: ergo hoc de Deo nullo modo est aestimandum.”

CXLI. *Propositio II. Interiori gratiae in statu naturae lapsae, nunquam resistitur.*

D. Thomas primae ad Thessalonicenses cap. 5. lect. 2. “Aliquis dicitur extinguere spiritum in se, vel in alio, cum alius aliquid boni ex fervore Spiritus sancti vult facere ; vel etiam cum aliquis bonus motus in ipso surgit, ET IPSE IMPEDIT: Actorum 7. Vos semper Spiritui Sancto restitistis.”

⁶⁵ See *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 257.

⁶⁶ Jean-Baptiste Racine, “Phaedra,” Act IV, vi, trans. Robert Bruce Boswell at www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/1977/pg1977.txt.

⁶⁷ Thanks to the Reverend Monsignor Laurence McGrath, Professor Jörgen Vijgen, and Cajetan Cuddy, O.P., for their invaluable assistance in developing this essay.

Quibus verbis aperte agnoscit S. Doctor, in statu naturae lapsae gratiam aliquam interiorem moventem, cui resistitur. Similiter aliis in locis admittit auxilium quo homo non utitur, et quod in vanum recipit: ait enim 2. ad Corinth. cap. 6. lect. 1. “Quicumque GRATIA RECEPTA NON UTITUR ad vitandum peccata, et consequendam vitam aeternam, hic gratiam Dei in vanum recipit.” Et 1. 2. qu. 106. art. 2. ad 2. “Si quis post acceptam gratiam novi Testamenti peccaverit, majori poena est dignus, tamquam majoribus beneficiis ingratus, et AUXILIO SIBI DATO NON UTENS.”

CXLII. Propositio III. *Ad merendum et demerendum in statu naturae lapsae, non requiritur in homine libertas a necessitate, sed sufficit libertas a coactione.*

D. Thomas qu. 6. de malo, quae est de electione humana: “Respondeo dicendum, quod quidam posuerunt, quod voluntas hominis ex necessitate movetur ad aliquid eligendum, nec tamen ponebant quod voluntas cogeretur ; non enim omne necessarium est violentum, etc. Haec autem opinio est HAERETICA, TOLLIT ENIM RATIONEM MERITI ET DEMERITI, in humanis actibus ; non enim videtur esse meritorium, vel demeritorium, quod aliquis sic ex necessitate agit, quod vitare non possit.” Quo nihil clarius et expressius dici potest.

CXLIII. Propositio IV. *Semipelagiani admittebant praevenientis gratiae necessitatem ad singulos actus, etiam ad initium fidei ; et in hoc erant Haeretici, quod vellent eam gratiam talem esse, cui posset humana voluntas resistere, vel obtemperare.*

D. Thomas quodlib. I. art. 7. ad 2. “Deus movet omnia secundum modum eorum, et ideo divina motio a quibusdam participatur cum necessitate, a natura rationali cum libertate, propter hoc quod virtus rationalis se habet ad opposita ; et ideo sic Deus movet mentem humanam ad bonum, quod potest HUIC MOTIONI RESISTERE.”

CXLIV. Propositio V. *Semipelagianum est dicere, Christum pro omnibus omnino hominibus mortuum esse, aut sanguinem fudisse.*

D. Thomas 1. ad Timoth. 2. lect. 1. “Christus Jesus est mediator Dei et hominum, NON QUORUMDAM, sed inter Deum et OMNES HOMINES, et hoc non esset, nisi vellet omnes salvare.” Nam voluntas Dei circa hominum salutem, et voluntas Christi mortem suam offerentis, et per eam media ad salutem sufficientia omnibus praeparantis, sunt parallelae, et sibi mutuo correspondent. Unde idem S. Doctor super caput 1. ejusdem epistolae, lect. 1. ait quod “Per illam voluntatem Deus omnibus proposuit salutis praecepta, consilia, et remedia.» Et in I. dist. 46. qu. 1. art. 1. “Hujus voluntatis effectus, est ipse ordo in finem salutis, et promoventia in finem, tam naturalia, quam gratuita.” Et super cap. 12. Epist. ad

Hebraeos lect. 5. “Deus vult omnes homines salvos fieri, et ideo gratia nulli deest, sed omnibus, quantum in se est, se communicat.” Similiter 3. contra Gentes cap. 159. “Deus quantum in se est, paratus est omnibus dare gratiam, vult enim omnes homines salvos fieri.”

N.V.