

God the Son: Trinitarian Christology Markers in the Thomist Tradition

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Introduction*

IN HIS "INTRODUCTION" to questions 33–43 of the *Prima Pars*, the twentieth-century Thomist scholar (whose spirit still occupies this House of Studies), T. C. O'Brien, O.P., observes that "the final Question [43 on the divine missions] opens out on to that singular accomplishment of St Thomas, the *Secunda Pars*, which centres around union with God by grace and points to the experience, beyond naming, of God with us, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."¹ This insightful remark on the articulation and structure of the *Summa theologiae* suffices to establish the theoretical grounds for what one may call Aquinas's Trinitarian Christology. We attribute to the second person in God the Logos-pattern of all that is created, including human freedom and the moral life, and we confess him, who, as man, becomes the indispensable and irreplaceable one mediator of the uplifted life of divine grace.²

* The following reflections were delivered at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, DC, on the occasion of an international gathering of Dominicans interested in the Thomist tradition. Since 1941, the Holy See has recognized the theological faculty at this House of Studies or Studium as a Pontifical or Ecclesiastical Faculty.

¹ T. C. O'Brien, *Father, Son and Holy Ghost*, vol. 7, *Summa Theologiae*, Blackfriars ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976), xxii.

² See ST III, q. 26, a. 2 and Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2000 Declara-

In order to illustrate what Aquinas teaches about the Incarnate Son, I have chosen five sample topics that illustrate the Thomist preferences for resolving certain disputed questions within Trinitarian Christology. My purpose is twofold. In addition to both recalling and pointing out the present-day importance of some characteristic features of Thomist Christology, I wish also to raise a metaquestion about the nature and perennial validity of the commentatorial tradition in which these features or doctrinal clarifications are found.³ In a purely heuristic fashion then, I ask—and invite you to consider—whether it is possible to recognize in the selected five topics (that treat several questions related to the theology of the Incarnation) an underlying pattern of thought that would evince the essential form of the Thomist commentatorial tradition. To develop the “winding river” metaphor that I have already employed in *A Short History of Thomism*, I would now like to identify some “markers” in the Thomist commentatorial tradition that have served to keep Thomist Christology from running aground on the shoals.⁴

These “markers” represent theological positions that, over the centuries, have generated a large-scale consensus among commentators on the works of Aquinas. Thomist theses such as those that relate to Christ and others that could be enumerated, I submit, also illustrate certain benefits that accrue to Dominicans (and others) who are willing to mine the commentatorial tradition. The benefits that I would like to underscore in this conference include both the preservation of a distinctively Thomist identity and the safeguarding of Catholic theological orthodoxy. Additional advantages of learning from the Thomist tradition would be easy to elucidate.⁵

tion “Dominus Iesus” on the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church. For the appropriation of eternal law to the divine Word, see *ST* I-II, q. 91, a.1, ad 2, and *ST* I, q. 34, a. 3.

³ For a monograph that studies Christological themes in Thomas de Vio Cajetan, see Marcel Nieden, *Organum Deitatis: Die Christologie des Thomas de Vio Cajetan*, Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought 62, ed. Heiko A. Oberman (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

⁴ See Romanus Cessario, O.P., *A Short History of Thomism* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 34–35.

⁵ Pope Francis has recently addressed the themes of Pelagian tendencies and Gnosticism as dangers present in contemporary theology. He echoes remarks made by his predecessor, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. See Andrea Tornielli, “Francis, Ratzing-

First of all, consider the benefit of our keeping Thomism intact and alive. Adherence to a body of commonly held and taught theses has kept Thomists from wandering away from basic tenets that characterize the master whom we have gathered to commemorate. In other words, they have given Thomists a community identity without which gatherings such as this one would serve no distinctive purpose. This benefit does not mean that Thomism proves valuable only to maintain school spirit and to provide a reason for reunions among like-minded scholars. The Thomist commentatorial tradition is just that, a living tradition of intellectual and volitional attachment.⁶ Thomism, of course, allows for disagreements about subissues. One glance, for example, at the manuals published in the mid-1960s by the Oblate Emmanuel Doronzo reveals the controlled dialectic that Thomism opens up.⁷ Alasdair MacIntyre speaks about a “constrained disagreement” that characterizes Aquinas’s theological method.⁸ To put it briefly: One should clear the head of the contrivance that Thomism supplies mind-numbing palliative care for those unwilling or unable to confront present-day currents of thought. History shows that Thomism never sought to construct a fortress position. Consider the adventurous undertaking sustained by John Capreolus (d. 1444). From Rodez, a small town in the Midi-Pyrénées region of France, this Dominican knocked at the doors, as it were, of every significant nominalist of his age, including one of our own, Durandus of Saint-Pourçain, O.P. (d. c.1334).⁹ In any event, because Dominicans love

er and the Pelagianism risk,” *Vatican Insider*, June 12, 2013, <http://vaticaninsider.lastampa.it/en/the-vatican/detail/articolo/francesco-francis-francisco-benedetto-xvi-benedict-xvi-benedicto-xvi-25586/>.

⁶ I envisage certain coherence between this view and that of “living Thomism” that Serge-Thomas Bonino favors in his “To Be a Thomist,” trans. Thérèse Scarpelli Cory, *Nova et Vetera* (English) 8 (2010): 763–73.

⁷ See Emmanuel Doronzo, O.M.I., *Theologica Dogmatica*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC: Apud Auctorem, 1966–68).

⁸ Alasdair MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopedia, Genealogy and Tradition* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), 233.

⁹ John Capreolus set himself against the objections of Auriol, Scotus, Durandus, John of Ripa, Guido of Carmelo, Varro, Adam, and others who attacked St. Thomas. For further information, see *Jean Capreolus en son temps (1380–1444): Mémoire Dominicaine*, Numéro spécial 1, ed. Guy Bedouelle and Kevin White (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1997).

Aquinas, they do not want him relegated to serving as a juncture, even though an important juncture, in the historical flow of theological positions developed since the mid-thirteenth century. Failure, however, to sustain an identifiable Thomist point of view on substantial questions both philosophical and theological, would indeed relegate the study of Aquinas to a subdiscipline within medieval historical studies. This fate describes what already has befallen other theologians of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. When was held the last international reunion of the disciples of Godfrey of Fontaines (c. 1250–1306?), even though he ranks among the most prodigious and popular theologians of the high Middle Ages? What about Henry of Ghent (d. 1293)? Giles of Rome (d. 1316)?

Second, and what is more important, rightly formulated Thomist theses give precision to Catholic truth in a way that, at least in the best-case scenario, exhibits conformity with how the Church stipulates what the practice of the Catholic faith requires. This second benefit of Thomism in its commentatorial vigor may not appear as self-evident as the first. Still, one may appeal *prima facie* to the use made of Aquinas's texts in postconciliar magisterial documents, including the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, where direct citations to Aquinas occur more than sixty times. More evidence, I acknowledge, is required to substantiate the claim that the Thomist tradition fosters sound theological practice within the Church. At the same time, the five theses that I have selected for this exercise do not require historical excavation in order to illustrate how, today, they serve to protect and elucidate Catholic faith. Each of the five theses discloses an important feature of the "logic of the Incarnation."¹⁰ In other words, we find abundant evidence for the importance of the commentatorial tradition woven into the authentic pronouncements of the Magisterium.

I

Since the publication of *After Virtue* in 1981, it is generally agreed that the work of Professor Alasdair MacIntyre has given an overall boost to contemporary Thomism. For instance, the approaches to knowledge

¹⁰ See *Fides et ratio*, §94. The encyclical refers to Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum*, §13.

that MacIntyre distinguishes in his 1990 book, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, afford us a way to inquire about the essential form of the Thomist commentatorial tradition. On a purely pragmatic level, it may be hoped that applying MacIntyre's analytical matrix to elucidate the commentatorial tradition would render modern thinkers more benevolent toward it and make Thomism and the Thomists intelligible and, perhaps, even appealing to them. Otherwise put, MacIntyre's analysis of the different views about "knowledge" represented by the Encyclopedist, the Nietzschean, and Aristotelian supplies a hermeneutical and speculative lens familiar to many of our contemporaries through which they may be persuaded to approach something largely unfamiliar to them, to wit, the Thomist commentatorial tradition.

One attempt to explain the commentatorial tradition in MacIntyreian categories runs like this: Thomism, it may be argued, is encyclopedic to the extent that it is compendious, though Thomism stands against the encyclopedia mentality and its criteria for sure knowledge. That is, the Thomist compendia do not stake their claims to truth on the "progress of science."¹¹ Thomist theologians, at least, should look up—that is, toward the *sacra doctrina*—before they look forward—that is, before they try to anticipate how the intellectual swells of any given day may find themselves disposed to receive what "comes from God's own knowledge," as Matthew Levering aptly describes the content of theology.¹² Next, Thomism is genealogical inasmuch as its arguably six-century-long (or more) lineage of authors' establishes a basic pedigree, a family tree, as it were.¹³ The Thomist genealogy, however, does not imply "a multiplicity of perspectives within each of which [authors] truth-from-a-point-view may be asserted, but no truth-as-such."¹⁴ The Thomist commentator does not destroy idols in order for something new and unexpected to evolve, and then proceed to criticize others for not facing the future with the bravado of an *Übermensch*, a Superman. I return

¹¹ MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, 19.

¹² Michael Dauphinais and Matthew Levering, *Knowing the Love of Christ: An Introduction to the Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), 2.

¹³ Bonino, "Thomist Tradition," 872, suggests that "one might prefer the . . . flexible metaphor of a line of ancestors or the members of a single species spanning different generations."

¹⁴ MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, 42.

to the metaphor of the “winding river.” Thomism instead represents a living tradition; one marked more by its identifiable continuity than by its occasional displays of discontinuity. The Thomist commentatorial tradition—an expression made popular in this House of Studies by William A. Wallace, O.P.—while it begins arguably with those who first read the works of the Common Doctor, owes its existence to the method of the commentators, which emerges in the first half of the fifteenth century with the *Defensiones* of their *Principes*.¹⁵ When one considers the roughly five-hundred-year period from the death of Capreolus in 1444 to the death of Garrigou-Lagrange in 1964, it is difficult to discover major hiatuses in the Thomist commentatorial tradition.¹⁶ When Thomists seemed inactive, the reasons were neither intellectual laziness nor their abandonment of St. Thomas, except in the unusual case of someone like Thomas Campanella, O.P. (d. 1639), but rather the impediments that sprang from such catastrophic events as the French Revolution or other forms of political repression.¹⁷

II

Briefly put, we can discover the basic structure of the commentatorial

¹⁵ By “method of the commentators,” I do not mean commentaries in the literal sense. The commentatorial tradition should not be understood so much as a genus of scholastic writings (e.g., writings that are appended to and merely summarize and interpret the actual text of the Angelic Doctor), but rather as the application of the principles of St. Thomas’s thought to the unique challenges of a given period. Thus Cardinal Cajetan and John of St. Thomas both share in the “commentatorial tradition” even though John of St. Thomas did not “comment” on the Thomistic corpus in the same manner as did Cardinal Cajetan.

¹⁶ In the late 1960s, Father William J. Hill, O.P., taught his class in dogmatic theology that Capreolus may have been the recipient of certain oral traditions that had been passed on within the Dominican Order. For more information about Capreolus, see *John Capreolus: On the Virtues*, trans. Kevin White and Romanus Cessario (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2001).

¹⁷ See my “Mary in the Thomist Commentatorial Tradition,” in *Sapienza e libertà. Studi in Onore del Prof. Lluís Clavell*, ed. Miguel Pérez de Laborda (Rome: Edizioni Santa Croce, 2012): 81–88: “One of the most celebrated of the Dominican ‘dissenters’ is Thomas Campanella (1568–1639), the highly eclectic thinker who, on account of his political views, spent twenty-seven years in the Naples prison of his Catholic Majesty, even though the Spanish viceroy at the time, Pedro Girón, Duke of Ossuna, was a fervent devotee of the Immaculate Conception. It was of course Campanella’s communist views on political organization not on the Immaculate that kept him locked up” (87).

tradition in the distinction between act and form, on the one hand, and potency and matter, on the other. As the abovementioned Dominican commentator, Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, was wont to remark, “the definition of potency [and act] determines the Thomistic synthesis.”¹⁸ When one explains the commentatorial tradition by reference to form and matter, the Dominican finds that he is able both to account for historical contingencies and to identify a formal unity that makes Thomism more than an amorphous collection of self-defined authors. The perennial form of Thomism is “individuated”—so to speak—by the particular needs faced by Thomists in the different periods of history. Theological disagreements supply the material or contingent element for the commentatorial tradition. Nonetheless, Thomism also claims a distinctive form. This form distinguishes Thomists from non-Thomists and eclectic Thomists from mainline Thomists. Form supplies, as it were, the universal and perennial element that runs through the mainline commentators. This form/matter distinction affords a way for Dominicans and their fellow travelers to account for both the differences and, at the same time, the fundamental unity of the Thomist tradition. The importance of the fundamental principles of act and potency emerge no longer as mere “theses” arbitrarily allocated a definitive place in the material constitution of Thomism. Rather, act and potency emerge as constituting the very form of Thomism itself.¹⁹

The historical elements and differences relevant to the commentatorial tradition all arise from the application of the fundamental speculative principles (the formal element) to the particular challenges of a given epoch (the material element). Because they were each engaging different questions proper to their particular periods, Thomists, of course, exhibit a wonderful variety: Cajetan is not Bañez, who is not John of St.

¹⁸ Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *Reality: A Synthesis of Thomistic Thought* (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1950), 37.

¹⁹ The point here is that the real distinction between act and potency (the first of the Twenty-four Theses) is not one thesis among many. Rather, the Thomist tradition receives fundamental shape through this first and primary tenet of St. Thomas’s teaching. The real distinction between act and potency—and the implications that flow therefrom on the levels of nature and of grace—stands at the heart of St. Thomas’s speculative synthesis. Moreover, it is the soul of the commentatorial tradition’s application and extension of that synthesis to the unique questions that each Thomist faced in his particular period.

Thomas, who is not Garrigou-Lagrange. Nonetheless, these and other noneclectic Thomists all share common first principles—probably reducible to less than a dozen in number; maybe even half a dozen—that run throughout their works without suppressing these authors’ apparent differences and unique contributions. The Twenty-four Theses that the Holy See proposed in 1914 may be understood as a large-scale effort to indicate such formal principles.²⁰ Although this occasion does not afford the opportune moment to draw up the definitive list of Thomist first principles, were such a list to be composed, undoubtedly the first thesis of the 1914 list would remain in first position: “Potency and Act so divide being that whatsoever exists either is a Pure Act, or is necessarily composed of Potency and Act, as to its primordial and intrinsic principles.”²¹ G. K. Chesterton illustrates what I have in mind. He wryly remarked that Father Martin D’Arcy had observed a “remarkable difference” between Hegel and Aquinas, namely, that “for St. Thomas it is impossible that contradictories should exist together, and again reality and intelligibility correspond, but a thing must first be, to be intelligible.” To which Chesterton replied: “Let the man in the street be forgiven if he adds that the ‘remarkable difference’ seems to him to be that St. Thomas was sane and Hegel was mad.”²²

²⁰ Sacred Congregation of Studies, Decree of Approval of some theses contained in the Doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas and proposed to the Teachers of Philosophy, Rome, July 27, 1914. For further discussion and background, see Jesús Villagrasa, L.C., “Origin, Nature and Initial Reception of the XXIV Thomistic Theses in the Light of the Controversy between Neo-Thomism and Suarezianism,” *Doctor Angelicus* 6 (2006): 193–230; Russell Hittinger, “Two Modernisms, Two Thomisms: Reflections on the Centenary of Pius X’s Letter against the Modernists,” *Nova et Vetera* (English) 5, no. 4 (2007): 843–80; José Pereira, “Thomism and the Magisterium: From *Aeterni Patris* to *Veritatis splendor*,” *Logos* 5, no. 3 (2002): 157–93; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Reality*, 357–67; Pedro Lumbreras, O.P., *The Twenty-Four Fundamental Theses of Official Catholic Philosophy* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1944); Edouard Hugon, O.P., *Les vingt-quatre thèses thomistes* (Paris: Pierre Téqui, 1927).

²¹ “Potentia et actus ita dividunt ens, ut quidquid est vel sit actus purus, vel ex potentia et actu tamquam primis atque intrinsecis principiis necessario coalescat.” See Lumbreras, *Twenty-Four Fundamental Theses*, 13. See also *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, vol. VI, 383ff.

²² G. K. Chesterton, *Saint Thomas Aquinas / Saint Francis of Assisi* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2002), 135. See, e.g., Thesis XIX. “We, therefore, receive our knowledge from sensible things. But since no sensible thing is actually intelligible, besides the intellect which is properly intelligent we must admit in the soul an active power which abstracts the intelligible forms from the phantasms” (Lumbreras, *Twenty-Four Fundamental Theses*, 24).

In any event, once these common principles are recognized, historical contingency can be explained by appeal to the material and individuating principles, that is, the unique challenges that each Thomist commentator faced in his period. At the same time, the importance of the present emerges clearly: through their stalwart pursuit of the truth, the work of the commentators “incarnatized” the perennial wisdom in the contingencies of their own *hic et nunc*. This axiom merits credence because the past, properly speaking, does not exist: they, the Thomist commentators dealt with the perennial “now” of reality.²³ For the Thomist, transcendental truth remains the ultimate criterion for establishing and applying the principles that explain reality both the natural and the supernatural. Being founds or grounds and governs Thomistic contemplation. Being—in its full, ontological density and vigor—only exists in the present. Thomists recognize this judgment about what is real on the levels of nature and of grace. The now of being unifies Thomistic philosophical contemplation. The eternal now of supernatural Being—God himself—unifies theology.²⁴ Because it is founded upon the simple priority of form to matter in scientific as well as in the existential spheres, the “formal object” identifies and unifies *scientia* on the levels of both nature and supernature.²⁵ Being precedes *scientia*. Reality precedes the scientist. The unifying, formal object affords the only way for the sci-

²³ The Thomist commentatorial tradition is not “un-historical” or “anti-historical” in its shape and structure. Quite the contrary. The commentatorial tradition admits to a rich diversity of engagements occasioned by the historical contingencies that characterize each Thomist’s own era. At the same time, Thomism’s formal commitment to the real distinction between potency and act enables Thomists to interpret properly historical contingencies. The real distinction between potency and act serves as a kind of “golden-thread” hermeneutical tool that enables us to recognize both the essential, unified form of Thomism and the genuine differences and unique contributions of the individual Thomists.

²⁴ Sound spiritual counsel, such as one finds within the Dominican Order, often appeals to the “Eternal Now.” God does not rely on memory. Dominican confessors should encourage their penitents to ponder this truth, especially when the psychological dynamics of guilt fueled by the memory of past sins, or even of past offences committed against them, weigh on the sinner.

²⁵ Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *De principiis naturae*, c. 4. Also see Cajetan’s commentary on ST I, q. 1, a. 3; John of St. Thomas, *The Material Logic of John of St. Thomas: Basic Treatises*, trans. Yves Simon, John Glanville, and G. Donald Hollenhorst (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), 549–86; and James A. Weisheipl, O.P., “The Meaning of *Sacra Doctrina* in *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1,” *The Thomist* 38 (1974): 49–80.

entist to know being and reality. For this reason, Thomism favors the *consideratio veri* or that reflection upon the truth that Aquinas identifies as contemplation.²⁶ In other words, as Father Weisheipl has helped us to recognize, the formal principle governs everything.²⁷ Since St. Thomas grasped the importance of the formal principle, he labored mightily to articulate the division and method of the sciences.²⁸ Philosophy is scientific. Theology is scientific. The proper parsing of the division and method of the sciences remains foundational and requisite to authentic Thomism, as our late and regretted Brother, Father Benedict Ashley, has argued convincingly in his *The Way Toward Wisdom*.²⁹

III

I introduce this methodological consideration about the Thomist commentatorial tradition in order to locate Thomist Christology within a larger picture of what Thomists and the Dominican Order in particular have sustained for nearly 750 years. The five Christological theses under discussion do not borrow quaint examples from one or another forgotten textbook from the past. That is, this present exercise does not aim to mount a museum exhibition of old Thomist theses. Neither should one consider the theses as candidates for a catalogue of long-forgotten internecine battles that everyone would do just as well to forget. Likewise, the five theses that I treat below are not meant to open up mere genealogical lines of historical inquiry; for example, to ask whether the seventeenth-century quarrels about grace and freedom would not best be

²⁶ See *ST* I-II, q. 35, a. 5, ad 2.

²⁷ Weisheipl's commentary on the *Posterior Analytics* of Aristotle is most illuminating on the nature and method of science: *Aristotelian Methodology: A Commentary on the Posterior Analytics of Aristotle* (River Forest, IL: Pontifical Institute of Philosophy, 1958). For an account of Weisheipl's understanding of Thomism in general, see my *Short History of Thomism*, 12–14. See also James A. Weisheipl's "Thomism as a Perennial Philosophy," Chaplain's Day Address, Cardinal Stritch College, March 14, 1965.

²⁸ See Thomas Aquinas, *The Division and Method of the Sciences: Questions V and VI of his Commentary on the De Trinitate of Boethius*, 4th ed., trans. Armand Maurer (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1986).

²⁹ For further discussion, see Benedict M. Ashley, *The Way toward Wisdom* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), 63ff. See also Ashley, "The River Forest School and the Philosophy of Nature Today," in *Philosophy and the God of Abraham*, ed. R. James Long (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1991), 1–16.

explained by delving into and then describing the various expressions of Jesuit, Jansenist, and Dominican resentments against one another.

My proposal aims to provide constructive suggestions to help Catholic theology regain its balance after fifty years of failed attempts to gain wide consensus on an adequate replacement for the services that Thomism rendered the Church before 1962.³⁰ Dominicans should advance a sacred teaching that all can agree is at home within the Church, that is, a theology *nella Chiesa*, though admittedly not, *della Chiesa*. The Christological themes selected figure importantly in the practice of the Catholic religion. They are at home within the Church. Some theology done today is not. Many scholars who find themselves professionally engaged with academic theology inhabit departments of religious studies where the penchant to abet if not to generate an inherently historicist or relativistic climate of thinking proceeds unabated. In light of this largely unpromising twenty-first-century university setting, Dominican study houses, I respectfully submit, offer the most likely venues for what I will provisionally call the development of a sapiential Thomism, that is, a Thomism that both flows from and is ordered to the *consideratio veri*.³¹

Today is not the first time that Dominicans have been called to shape their theological reflection in a way that conforms to the *consideratio veri*. Blessed Hyacinthe-Marie Cormier (1832–1916) in his celebrated “Instructions for Novices” made this observation about engagement with the theological disciplines such as they had emerged, at least in ecclesial settings, during the nineteenth century. Our Blessed anticipates

³⁰ See my “On the Place of Servais Pinckaers († 7 April 2008) in the Renewal of Catholic Theology,” *The Thomist* 73 (2009): 1–27.

³¹ Historicism and relativism are first cousins (if not siblings). When the aspiring practitioners of the sacred sciences withhold simple priority from act and form, then potency and matter alone remain. Because potency and act are really distinct, potency without act is reduced to pure potency. Because we only understand something insofar as it is in act, pure potency lacks any intrinsic principle of intelligibility. For further reflection on how this analysis bears on one’s approach to the sacred sciences, see Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *De revelatione per Ecclesiam Catholicam proposita*, 2 vols. (Rome: R. Ferrari, 1929); Garrigou-Lagrange, *The One God: A Commentary on the First Part of St. Thomas’ Theological Summa*, trans. Dom Bede Rose, O.S.B. (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1943), 39–92; Étienne Gilson, *Thomist Realism and the Critique of Knowledge*, trans. Mark A. Wauk (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986); and Jacques Maritain, *Science and Wisdom*, trans. Bernard Wall (London: Centenary Press, 1940).

some of the inconveniences that MacIntyre later would point out with respect to both encyclopedia and genealogy approaches to embracing the true. Cormier writes:

Without overlooking in prejudice the service which positive theology offers, we especially, as Friars Preachers, should therefore apply ourselves to scholastic theology more than to anything else. Should we hear some persons praise the former and denigrate the latter, we must remember that positive theology—besides the fact that it lacks the advantages of scholastic theology enumerated above—can fall into the drawbacks about which it reproached its rival. Indeed, many of its proponents also propose useless problems, concerning, for example, facts of history which have no connection with dogma, morality, or ecclesiastical discipline. They treat these historical questions too extensively; in the midst of many citations and incidents, they lose sight of the center of the question. Instead of clarifying, they can even inject uncertainty by including a number of contradictory inferences which baffle the mind.³²

What Blessed Cormier calls “the center of the question” corresponds, I again respectfully submit, to what I above describe as the marked-out middle of the “winding river”—the sapiential form of Thomism. As preachers of the truth, Dominicans may adopt no other standpoint in order to exercise their ministry of perfection: “For just as it is better to illumine than merely to shine, so it is better to give to others the things contemplated than simply to contemplate.”³³ This high purpose, however, cannot be reached unless a person “give himself over to the contemplation of wisdom,” as St. Thomas himself intimates when he explains why a contemplative person would reasonably also imitate evangelical

³² B. Hyacinthe-Marie Cormier, O.P., *Instructions for Novices*, trans. George G. Christian, O.P., and Richard L. Christian (New York: Dominican Province of St. Joseph, 2013), 285–86. I read “scholastic” here not so much as a genre or style of speculative discourse and writing, but as a method of thought and reflection founded upon a consistent commitment to first principles.

³³ ST II-II q. 188, a. 6, trans. Jordan Aumann, O.P., *The Pastoral and Religious Lives*, vol. 47, *Summa Theologiae*, Blackfriars ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973), 205.

simplicity in his life.³⁴ Contemplatives should entertain nothing that would distract them from their embrace of the true Object.

IV

The first of our five Thomist theses inquires about the formal constitutive of the created person. This first thesis, one that drew a certain attention from Thomists of the Leonine revival, actually dates from the earliest period of commentatorial activity and finds extended treatment among later commentatorial Thomists. On what constitutes a person, mainline Thomists differ from Scotists as well as from eclectic Thomists. Scotus held for a negative definition. Suarez pursued a nonmetaphysical approach, that is, person as properly a part of physics.³⁵ Billot conflated personhood with *esse tout court*. Mainline commentatorial Thomists, on the other hand, distinguish person from individuated nature by appeal to a metaphysical distinction. Although Cajetan and Capreolus sometimes are said to exemplify a radical diversity among even mainline Thomists, each agrees that what makes an individual a person is a positive reality that falls somewhere between essence and existence. Thomas Urban Mullaney, O.P. (d. 1989), longtime teacher in this ecclesiastical faculty, has argued that one may interpret Cajetan's "mode" and Capreolus's "relation" as pointing to the same metaphysical perfection that makes created personhood something distinct from both the individuated human nature of Christ and the divine *esse* to which it is united in the hypostatic union.³⁶ In sum, Thomists hold for a metaphysical definition of created person that maintains the real distinction between potency and act. The implications for Christology are significant, especially when one considers everything that Aquinas attributes to the centrality of the hypostatic union in order to keep Catholic faith from falling apart, as he observes in *ST* IIIa q. 2, a. 2: *quod est subruere totam fidem Christianam*. The Fribourg Thomist, Jean-Pierre Torrell, O.P., draws out other implications from what St. Thomas deems as "what is

³⁴ *ST* II-II, q. 186, a. 3, ad 3, trans. Aumann, 111.

³⁵ See John P. Doyle, *Collected Studies on Francisco Suárez, S.J. (1548–1617)* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010), 12.

³⁶ See T. U. Mullaney, "Created Personality: The Unity of Thomistic Tradition," *New Scholasticism* 29 (1955): 369–402.

most perfect in all of nature.”³⁷

Discussion about the nature of created personhood provides a helpful point of continuity within a diachronic analysis of the commentatorial tradition insofar as the debate begins with the fifteenth-century John Capreolus, continues through the sixteenth-century Thomas de Vio Cajetan, remains under discussion in the early modern Thomists, and surfaces again—in the work of Mullaney and others—among twentieth-century Thomists of the Leonine revival.³⁸ Discussion about created personhood also illustrates the debates that arise both intraschool (e.g., the difference between the nineteenth-century eclectic Billot and other Thomists) and interschool Thomists, for example, the difference between Scotus’s negative account of personhood (nonassumption) and the Thomist insistence on personhood as a metaphysical perfectant of the individuated nature. Discussions about the formal constitutive of a created person also exhibit the vitality of the Thomist tradition in service to the Church. To cite one example, the Church’s stand against embryonic stem cell research would not enjoy solid grounding were the only accounts of person those that required today’s Catholics to rely on psychological, legal, or, if I may say so, negative—that is, nonassumption by a higher supposit—arguments.

The second thesis concerns the nature of the instrumentality that one should ascribe to the human nature of Christ. Is the humanity of Christ a physical instrument of grace or does the humanity of Christ work morally? Moral causality, in this instance, would mean that the humanity of Christ is said to communicate a divine action because of the attractive proposals that Christ makes, on the one hand, or, on the other, by the modes of merit, satisfaction, and prayer that he exemplifies, as man, especially during the Passion. Thomists eschew falling back on an exclusively moral account of the instrumentality of Christ’s sacred

³⁷ See *ST* Ia q. 29, a. 3, as cited in Jean-Pierre Torrell, O.P., *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, vol. 2, *Spiritual Master*, trans. Robert Royal (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2003), 310ff.

³⁸ For further discussion of this controversy, see George Duggan, S.M., “The Teaching of St. Thomas Regarding the Formal Constitutive of Human Personality,” *New Scholasticism* 15 (1941): 318–49; James B. Reichmann, S.J., “St. Thomas, Capreolus, Cajetan and the Created Person [1],” *New Scholasticism* 33 (1959): 1–31; Reichmann, “St. Thomas, Capreolus, Cajetan and the Created Person [2],” *New Scholasticism* 33 (1959): 202–30.

humanity. They rather affirm almost without exception that the humanity of Christ, from the moment of the Incarnation, whether dwelling on earth or reigning in heaven, was and remains a physical instrument of grace and miracles.³⁹ “Physical” in this context means that the humanity of Christ causes what it causes by comparison, *mutatis mutandis*, with the divine creative action that brings everything into existence *ex nihilo*. Various opinions on how the humanity of Christ works in the world distinguish schools of Catholic theology and spirituality. Christological exemplarism finds many adherents, with the obvious shift in emphasis in Christian spirituality from a premeditated bestowal of divine gifts to a person’s self-generated readiness to receive and act upon these gifts. St. Louis Marie de Montfort (d. 1716) summed up the tenor of Thomist teaching when he wrote that those who abide in the Blessed Virgin Mary would prefer to be formed instead of chiseled.⁴⁰ All in all, the saints point us to Christ and Mary as the principal physical mediations that shape Christian character. Their metaphors—for example, Our Lady as the “channel” through which the graces from Christ the Head flow to the members of his body—make it difficult to think otherwise.⁴¹ St. Alphonsus Liguori (d. 1787), whom we ordinarily do not include in the standard catalogue of Thomists, speaks of Mary as the “neck” of the mystical body, and he cites ancient and medieval authors as precedent for the practice.⁴² While the reference to Our Lady as the “neck” of the

³⁹ Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *De Christo Salvatore: Commentarium in Illam Partem Summae Theologiae Sancti Thomae* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer & C., 1945), 288.

⁴⁰ See William G. Most, *Mary in Our Life* (New York: Kennedy, 1959), chap. 18: “St. Louis de Montfort compares Mary to a mould. There are two ways to make a statue or image, says St. Louis. One way is by chiseling it out of a block of stone, one stroke at a time. In this method very great skill is needed, as great damage might come from one slip. The other is to have a perfect mould, and pour molten material into it. Mary is the mould in which Christ was formed. So also we could be quickly formed to the image of her Son, by docility to the inspirations which come through her, both by actual graces and by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, whose spouse she is.” For the reference, see St. Louis de Montfort, *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary*, nos. 219–21.

⁴¹ *Oeuvres complètes de saint Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort* (Paris: Aux Éditions du Seuil, 1966), *Amour de la Sagesse Éternelle*, no. 206, 207: “il descend aucun don céleste sur la terre qu’il ne passe pas elle [Marie] comme par un canal.” *Le Secret de Marie*, no. 35, 457: “N’est-il pas juste que la grâce retourne à son auteur, dit saint Bernard, par le même canal par lequel elle nous est venue?”

⁴² See, e.g., St. Alphonsus Liguori, *The Glories of Mary* (New York: P. J. Kennedy, 1888), 741: “Collum tuum sicut turris eburnea’ (Sg 4:4); Mary is called the neck, for she is

mystical body undoubtedly occurs in the writings of early Christian authors, it is not impossible that St. Alphonsus may have discovered this “physical” metaphor in a Thomist theological manual used in the eighteenth century, to wit, the *Cursus Theologicus* of John of Saint Thomas.⁴³ Physical instrumentality represents, only mildly, an intra-Thomist debate. The sixteenth-century Salamanca theologian Melchior Cano, O.P. (c. 1509-60), famously prefers moral causality.⁴⁴ It would be interesting to discover the reasons for his stepping outside of the mainline position. The sixteenth-century Protestant reformers’ rejection of created mediation may be one of them.

For a variety of reasons, the place that physical instrumentality holds in sound theology has been eclipsed during the postconciliar period. This thesis affects not only the activity of Christ but also the manner that the sacraments of the Church confer grace. Issues that flow from discussion about the way that Christ’s humanity divinizes the world further affect subjects commonly treated under the heading of ecclesiology as well as important questions developed in Mariology. Consider the witness of Pope John Paul II: “Mary is not only the model and figure of the Church; she is much more. For, ‘*with maternal love she cooperates in the birth and development*’ of the sons and daughters of Mother Church.”⁴⁵ Birth and development comport much more with physical than they do with exemplary causality. As Cano perhaps unwittingly reminds us,

the mystic neck through whom from the head, Jesus Christ, are transmitted to us the faithful, who are the members of the mystic body of the Church, the vital spirits, namely, the divine help which preserves in us the life of grace.”

⁴³ See John of St. Thomas, *Cursus theologicus*, ed. Vivès, t. VII, q. 23, 403: “After God, however, each one loves himself more than his neighbor, for he must love others as himself. Hence, he is as it were the primary exemplar of those to be loved, because [he loves] himself as a sharer in divine glory and others as associates in sharing. But I make an exception for Christ the Lord, even as man, and the Blessed Virgin mother, because they share something of the nature of the source communicating grace and beatitude to us, for Christ as man is the fountainhead of glory, and the Blessed Virgin [is] the mother of the fountainhead and the neck through which grace is dispensed, and therefore we must love them more than ourselves.”

⁴⁴ Melchior Cano preferred to speak about moral causality, which he contrasted, however, with a natural causality. See *Relectio de Sacramentis in genere, Pars IIII* (Milan, 1580): “Continere (inquam) non ut causa naturalis continet suum effectum, sed ut causa moralis” (32).

⁴⁵ See Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater*, 1987, no. 44.

rejection of physical causality may affect how Dominicans present the sacraments as instruments of salvation.⁴⁶

The third thesis concerns the motive for the Incarnation. Because of the spiritual significance that some schools attach to the kingship of Christ, this thesis remains one of the most researched among the inter-school disputes that involve Thomists. The Franciscan scholar Juniper Carol amassed a large volume, *Why Jesus Christ?*, which was published in 1986, to defend what he calls the absolute primacy of Christ.⁴⁷ Thomists, of course, recognize that the end (*telos*) of the Incarnation remains the transformation of the human person. Christ comes to lead men to glory. At the same time, Thomists uphold Aquinas's view that the Sacred Scriptures supply no reason or motive for the Incarnation other than the need that a sinful humanity experiences for a Savior whose mission, precisely as dolorous, suits or becomes the state of fallen mankind.⁴⁸ The malposed question, whether Christ would have become man had Adam not sinned, began from the early twelfth century to generate theological dispute and commentary by theologians of every stripe. Some ascribe this formulation of the question, though not the origin of the question itself, to the German Benedictine abbot Rupert of Deutz (c. 1075–1129). Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI summarized sympathetically this non-Thomist thesis during a general audience in 2009:

Like other medieval theologians, Rupert too wondered why the Word of God, the Son of God, was made man. Some, many, answered by explaining the Incarnation of the Word by the urgent need to atone for human sin. Rupert, on the other hand, with a Christocentric vision of salvation history, broadens the perspective, and in a work entitled *The Glorification of the Trinity*, sustains the position that the Incarnation, the central event of the whole of history was planned from eternity, even independently of human sin, so that the whole creation might praise

⁴⁶ See my "Sacramental Causality: *Da capo!*," *Nova et Vetera* (English) 11, no. 2 (2013): 307–16.

⁴⁷ Juniper B. Carol, O.F.M., *Why Jesus Christ? Thomistic, Scotistic and Conciliatory Perspectives* (Manassas, VA: Trinity Communications, 1985).

⁴⁸ See *ST* III, q. 1, a. 3.

God the Father and love him as one family gathered round Christ, the Son of God.⁴⁹

Rupert proposes a beautiful thought, though one difficult to sustain after reading during any given week several front pages of the *New York Times*. In any event, for his part, Father Carol discovers that the question of why God became man has been debated from the earliest periods of Christian theology. Thomists enjoy the singular advantage of being able to preach Christ to those who regularly read the *New York Times* and also to those who may even have contributed to the headlines.

Much depends on how one resolves this question of the motive for the Incarnation. St. Thomas's view fits his soteriology, and not only his, but that of the Church. Catholic practice assumes that a twofold work for man unfolds under the agency of the Incarnate Word for the benefit of the human race. One is the work of image restoration, which usually finds its center in the accomplishment of satisfaction that Christ undertook and that Christians united with him continue to undertake, efficaciously and congruously respectively. The other is the work of image perfection, which readies the human person for the life of benevolent fellowship with the Trinity. Thomist variations arise when one inquires about the nature of Christ's own satisfaction, namely, whether it was strict (condign) or attenuated.⁵⁰ The Thomist tradition, however, maintains a substantial unity in following Aquinas's answer to the question of why God became man. The answer also qualifies, so Dominicans should insist, as one that supports a Christocentric view of salvation history. I would like to mention the Irish Dominican Colman O'Neill (d. 1987), whose writings clearly demonstrate that St. Thomas's view of Christian satisfaction is ordered not to penal substitution but to the glorification of the Trinity—a theme that, in another philosophical idiom, Jean-Luc Marion has addressed recently at the first Edward

⁴⁹ Benedict XVI, General Audience, Paul VI Audience Hall, Wednesday, December 9, 2009.

⁵⁰ For further information on this *dubium*, see Garrigou-Lagrange, *De Christo Salvatore*, 427–29.

Cardinal Egan Lecture (May 18, 2013) under the title “The Visibility of the Gift: Sacrifice and Forgiveness.”⁵¹

The fourth thesis treats the way one should understand the sacrificing priest and the fruits of the Eucharistic sacrifice. Thomists follow Thomas de Vio Cajetan, O.P., when they make an argument for distinguishing among the fruits of each Eucharistic sacrifice and assign to the sacrificing priest the capacity to apply them.⁵² This thesis concerns the question of offerings for Masses and the suitability of requesting Masses for special intentions.⁵³ Some theologians, including eclectic Thomists such as Louis Billot, find it difficult to separate out the fruits of each Mass from the general intention for which the Mass is offered, namely for the many, both living and dead.⁵⁴ The inconvenience of this position for the practice of the Church, clarified during the post-conciliar period in a number of magisterial documents, especially the 1983 *Code of Canon Law*, is evident.⁵⁵ What is at stake, however, in the Thomist view does not first of all concern Mass stipends. The issue that lies behind this discussion involves the relationship of the ordained priest to the Eucharistic sacrifice. Today, the emphasis that the Church puts on the correlation between pastoral charity and the Eucharist reveals that the priest's personal identification with the Eucharistic sacrifice runs deep into his priestly identity. Thomists entertain an intraschool debate or *dubium* about the formal constitutive of Christ's priesthood. Some Spanish theologians, for example, the Carmelite Fathers at Salamanca, hold for Christ's priesthood arising from

⁵¹ See *Catholic New York* 32, no. 19 (2013): 14.

⁵² See Thomas de Vio Cajetan, *De Missa celebratione*, cap. 2 “Utrum sacerdos celebrans pro pluribus, satisfaciatur pro singulis” (*Opuscula Omnia Thomae de Vio Caietani* [Venice: Apud Iuntas, 1588], 147–49).

⁵³ See *Code of Canon Law*, Can. 946: “The faithful who make an offering so that Mass can be celebrated for their intention, contribute to the good of the Church, and by that offering they share in the Church's concern for the support of its ministers and its activities.”

⁵⁴ Louis Billot, *De Ecclesiae Sacramentis: Commentarius in Tertiam Partem S. Thomae*, 5th ed. (Rome: Ex Typographia Pontifica in Instituto Pii IX, 1914), thesis 56.

⁵⁵ See, e.g., *Code of Canon Law*, Can. 945 §1, “In accordance with the approved custom of the Church, any priest who celebrates or concelebrates a Mass may accept an offering to apply the Mass for a specific intention,” and §2, “It is earnestly recommended to priests that, even if they do not receive an offering, they celebrate Mass for the intentions of Christ's faithful, especially of those in need.”

his habitual grace, whereas the Dominicans favor identifying Christ's priesthood with the grace of union, which alone "renders Christ capable of offering a sacrifice of infinite value."⁵⁶ This intraschool question, however, already supposes that the priest exercises his headship preeminently in the celebration of the Eucharist.

The fifth thesis concerns the relationship of Christ to the moral life. Thomists hold for a Christian life animated by the infused virtues and gifts that in turn depend on the saving work of Christ "physically" active in the Christian believer who lives the moral life. We speak of physical premotion with respect to the divine agency at work in the moral life.⁵⁷ When believers freely embrace the perfective ends given in nature and perfected in grace, Thomists encourage them to ponder the question that St. Paul poses to the Corinthians: "What do you possess that you have not received?" (1 Cor 4:7).⁵⁸ We also discover in the moral life the pattern of the eternal Word, that is, the Logos pattern that stands as an exemplar of the moral life, as well as the indispensable imprint of Christ's cross, which represents everything that a redemptive Incarnation both accomplishes for the Christian and at the same time impresses on him or her. Outside of the Thomist tradition, one may identify three main alternative outlooks, shall we say, that purport to direct the living of a Christian life. They are: first, modern, sixteenth-century casuistry; second, Christological exemplarism, which, as noted above, is compelled to rely on what the canonical Scriptures and other recognized authorities stipulate about being Christian; and third, twentieth-century proportionalism or consequentialism. These alternatives however, even when account is taken of the *imitatio Christi*, find no substantial warrant in the magisterial documents that since 1993 have governed the development of sound moral theology. It is difficult, for example, to read *Veritatis Splendor* apart from the basic Thomist theses that inspire the encycli-

⁵⁶ Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *Le Sauveur et son amour pour nous* (Juvisy: Éditions du Cerf, 1933), 290.

⁵⁷ For an extensive treatment of physical premotion and the dynamics of grace in the moral life, see the three-volume work of Norbert Del Prado, O.P., *De gratia et libero arbitrio* (Fribourg: Ex Typis Consociationis Sancti Pauli, 1907).

⁵⁸ See Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *Grace: Commentary on the Summa theologiae of St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q. 109–14*, trans. Dominican Nuns Corpus Christi Monastery (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1952), 412–38.

cal's normative account of moral theology.⁵⁹ These Thomist inspirations first appear in the encyclical's basic teleological structure that, as T. C. O'Brien has remarked, opens up brilliantly in the *Secunda Pars*.⁶⁰

V

I began this discussion with the suggestion that one value of preserving the Thomist commentatorial tradition stems from its longstanding service to the Catholic Church and to her teachings both speculative and practical. To conclude, I wish to signal areas of theological concern that, especially since the Second Vatican Council, have been addressed in the papal magisterium. Thomism helps its adherents to expound each of them. (1) The culture of death. A strong account of created personhood serves, as indicated above, the Church's pro-life message, her defense of human dignity, and her insistence that the respect due to persons not succumb to evolving cultural policies, for example, on organ transplants.⁶¹ The 1995 Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, works on the assumption that the human person is not a legal or psychological myth. (2) Sacramental reductionism. The physical instrumental causality of Christ's sacred humanity affects the way the Church understands herself as the body of Christ. As I have pointed out elsewhere, during the postconciliar period, sacramental theology became absorbed into liturgical theology.⁶² Thomists prefer to complement liturgical studies with sacramental theology. Within this context, the issuance of *Redemptionis Sacramentum* sustains many of the principles that physical instrumental causality upholds.⁶³ Earlier, *Redemptor Hominis*

⁵⁹ See Steven A. Long, "Veritatis Splendor #78 and The Teleological Grammar of the Moral Act," *Nova et Vetera* (English) 6, no. 1 (2008): 139–56.

⁶⁰ For a more developed examination of these themes as they are related to the *Secunda Pars*, see my *Introduction to Moral Theology*, rev ed. (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2013).

⁶¹ See my "Organ Donation and the Beatific Vision: Thomist Moral Theology Confronts the Tide of Relativism," in *The Ethics of Organ Transplantation*, ed. Steven J. Jensen (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 195–216.

⁶² See my "The Sacraments of the Church," in *Vatican II: Renewal within Tradition*, ed. Matthew L. Lamb and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 129–46.

⁶³ Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, March 25, 2004, Instruction. *Redemptionis Sacramentum*: On certain matters to be observed or to be avoided regarding the Most Holy Eucharist.

displays the strong Christology that assumes more than a merely moral approach to Christ's saving work. Physical causality gives a robust account of the sacramental mediations that the Church administers, of the place that Christ holds in the political order, and of other issues that fall today within the discipline of ecclesiology, especially the teaching authority of the Roman Pontiff. (3) Romantic optimism. Thomist arguments for a redemptive Incarnation and the proper nature of Christ's mediation in the Church promote sound and realistic Christian devotion, conform to the pattern of image restoration and image perfection that governs the Church's sacramental practice, and take account of the obvious fact that a fallen and divided world needs a redeemer as well as a king.⁶⁴ (4) Ministerial confusion. Thomist teaching on the application of the fruits of the Mass to various intentions at the discretion of the ordained priest confirms the importance of a sacrificing priest, the nature of the Mass as a sacrifice, and the relationship that Christ's sacrifice establishes among believers both living and dead. The papal encyclical, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, emphasizes the relationship of the priest to the Eucharistic sacrifice.⁶⁵ (5) Moral relativism. The Thomist account of the

⁶⁴ See Mt 27:11, Mk 15:27, Lk 23:3, Jn 18:37, and Pope Pius XI's encyclical, *Quas primas*, as well as the presence of the Solemnity of Christ the King in the current liturgical calendar.

⁶⁵ To cite only one text: "The expression repeatedly employed by the Second Vatican Council, according to which 'the ministerial priest, acting in the person of Christ, brings about the Eucharistic Sacrifice,' was already firmly rooted in papal teaching. As I have pointed out on other occasions, the phrase *in persona Christi* 'means more than offering "in the name of" or "in the place of" Christ.' *In persona* means in specific sacramental identification with the eternal High Priest who is the author and principal subject of this sacrifice of his, a sacrifice in which, in truth, nobody can take his place.' The ministry of priests who have received the sacrament of Holy Orders, in the economy of salvation chosen by Christ, makes clear that the Eucharist which they celebrate is a gift which radically transcends the power of the assembly and [the ministry of priests] is in any event essential for validly linking the Eucharistic consecration to the sacrifice of the Cross and to the Last Supper. The assembly gathered together for the celebration of the Eucharist, if it is to be a truly Eucharistic assembly, absolutely requires the presence of an ordained priest as its president. On the other hand, the community is by itself incapable of providing an ordained minister. This minister is a gift which the assembly receives through episcopal succession going back to the Apostles. It is the Bishop who, through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, makes a new presbyter by conferring upon him the power to consecrate the Eucharist. Consequently, 'the Eucharistic mystery cannot be celebrated in any community except by an ordained priest, as the Fourth Lateran Council expressly

moral life succeeds for all the reasons that Father Servais-Th. Pinckaers has bequeathed to us in his *Les Sources de la morale chrétienne: Sa méthode, son contenu, son histoire*.⁶⁶

It now falls to a new generation of Dominicans to take up the heritage that belongs to them as a birthright. Misguided sympathy toward other points of view, especially those that occupy the trendy world that is beholden to secular university here-today-gone-tomorrow fashion, impedes the embrace of the doctrine of Aquinas that belongs rightfully within the Order. As Father William Joseph Hill, O.P., impressed on his students at the time of the Second Vatican Council, Thomism is not a closed system. Once a Dominican discovers the principles that guide Aquinas and his commentators, he is ready for whatever challenge may face the teacher of Catholic truth. 

taught" (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, §29).

⁶⁶ Servais-Théodore Pinckaers, *Les Sources de la morale chrétienne: Sa méthode, son contenu, son histoire* first appeared in 1985. The English edition, *The Sources of Christian Ethics*, trans. Mary Thomas Noble, was published in 1995. A fourth French edition was published in February 2007.

