

THE THOMISTIC CONCEPT OF DEVOTION



THE same general influence that was behind false Humanism, and, more important at the present time, behind Liberalism and Humanitarianism, the same influence that was behind the great Protestant heresy, is by no means dormant even today. It can best be described as the anthropocentric outlook and is opposed to the outlook that is theocentric.

In dogmatic theology this tendency has resulted in the over-emphasis of one aspect of certain truths to the exclusion of others. Thus, for example, over-insistence upon man's part in his personal sanctification has led to the neglect of the work of the Holy Ghost in that sphere—so much so that in a very real sense the Holy Ghost has become "The Forgotten God." Again in the problem of man's freedom and God's universal causality, it is responsible for the attempt at solution which starts from the fact of man's freedom and, holding this as sacrosanct, is willing to tamper with the principle of God's universal causality. The result is the proposal of a theory that is completely unacceptable from a theocentric point of view. Yet a third example of the influence of this anthropocentric tendency is to be found in the attitude of mind that can conceive of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament as a prisoner, albeit, "A Prisoner of Love," or that thinks of visits to the Blessed Sacrament in terms of comfort and consolation to the hidden Christ. Interesting in this regard is the fact that Saint Thomas who so wrote—both quantitatively and qualitatively—of the Blessed Sacrament as to deserve the title of Eucharistic Doctor, speaks of Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar as "King," as "Hidden Godhead," as "Son of God," as "Loving Pelican," as "Lord," and of the Blessed Sacrament as "Bread of Angels," "Bread of Heaven," "Living Bread," "Life-giving Bread," "Remembrance of Christ's Passion," but never of the "Prisoner of Love," nor the object of consolation or of comfort. His mind was too full of the Eternal Majesty which it "failed in trying to contemplate," to have time for such anthropocentric expressions as these.

In moral theology the anthropocentric outlook is responsible for casuistry—the system which, insofar as such an absurdity is possible, tries to take God out of theology. In worship it has resulted in the encouragement of a multitude of aliturgical devotions. This is true to such an extent that liturgy has become a

question of pleasing the people rather than of educating them. In church art it is the cause of a sentimentality and superficiality that is unworthy of the Supreme Being to Whom it attempts to pay homage.

Obviously if these things are the result of an anthropocentric outlook, the theocentric is their corrective. This is effected by a proper appreciation in the life of the Christian of the virtue of religion. And this appreciation in turn means the restoration to its place of supreme importance of the first and principal act of religion which is devotion. For devotion has been cast down from the place that required the greatest theologians of the Church and centuries of doctrinal development to discover for it. So true is this that devotion has again become the nebulous, undetermined anything whatsoever that it was before the great saints and theologians undertook to establish its identity. And even Saint Francis of Sales, whom Cayré calls, "The Master of Modern Spirituality," and of whom he says that he is without equal in influence in that field,¹ has to a certain extent at least, ignored all that preceding theologians have done, and has defined devotion as "a certain degree of excellence in charity."²

It is in an attempt to show how much the true concept of devotion differs from that which is ordinarily attributed to it that this study has been undertaken. More particularly, it is with the object of showing precisely what Saint Thomas has contributed to that concept. For while it is perfectly true to say that his doctrine on devotion is original, it is not true in the sense that it is a complete negation of all the doctrine that preceded him. It is still less true to say that his is the doctrine of a particular theologian or even of a particular school. It is the doctrine of the Church expressed by the majority of her great theologians, though not, we grant, with the clarity, completeness and beauty that is to be found in the *Summa Theologica* of the Angelic Doctor.

No attempt has been made here to determine the sources of Saint Thomas' doctrine, nor to propose all the doctrine on devotion that is to be found in the various periods of the Church's history. It is our purpose, rather, to determine precisely what the Angelic Doctor did in bringing to an illuminating culmination the efforts of his predecessors.

The works in which Saint Thomas treated of devotion are considered, as far as possible, in a chronological order. For his teaching on devotion is not the same in his earlier works as it is in the

¹ Cf. *Patrologie et Histoire de la Théologie*, F. Cayré, A. A. Vol. II, p. 841.

² *L'Introduction à la vie devote*, I, c. 1.

Summa Theologica. After tracing the development of his doctrine through his successive works we shall conclude with a short treatment of the place of devotion in the scheme of Christian perfection, as this has been explained for us by two of Saint Thomas' greatest commentators in applying the doctrine which he refined.

I. SAINT THOMAS' CONCEPT OF DEVOTION AS CONTAINED IN HIS COMMENTARY ON THE SENTENCES OF PETER LOMBARD

1. *Introduction*. Because Saint Thomas defines devotion in the *Summa Theologica* as the act by which man is prompt to worship God,³ there is a strong temptation in tracing his doctrine on devotion in his works earlier than and contemporary with the *Summa* to conclude that wherever he uses the word, "prompt," he has reference to the act which in the *Summa* has so determined a meaning and so important a position. But such a conclusion is not warranted for there is a promptitude natural to man's will, resulting from creation and varying in degree in different people.⁴ There is proper to every virtue a readiness to action that does not require the influx of any special quality or act of promptitude. It is a part of the ease of operation which Saint Thomas many times assigns to habits, as he does, for example, when he says that habits in the will are necessary in order that the will be inclined to operate more promptly;⁵ or again when he says that by the moral virtues the appetites are disposed to give prompt obedience to reason.⁶ Then there is the special promptitude that derives from the gifts of the Holy Ghost, a promptitude so essential to these sublime habits that the Angelic Doctor includes it in their very definition.⁷ It would be unsafe, therefore, to conclude from the isolated use of the word promptitude, a use that occurs time and again throughout the

³ *Devotio nihil aliud esse videtur quam voluntas quaedam prompte tradendi se ad ea quae pertinent ad Dei famulatum* (II-II, q. 82, a. 1, c).

⁴ *Videmus in hominibus ex parte corporis magnam diversitatem, secundum quod unus alio ad bonum et malum promptior est, ut patet in diversis hominum complexionibus. Ergo oportet quod eorum animae ex sua creatione diversitatem habeant* (*II Sent.*, d. XXXII, q. 2, a. 3, Sed Contra 1).

⁵ *Voluntas ex ipsa natura potentiae inclinatur in bonum rationis. Sed quia hoc bonum multipliciter diversificatur, necessarium est ut ad aliquod determinatum bonum rationis voluntas per aliquem habitum inclinetur, ad hoc quod sequatur promptior operatio* (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 50, a. 5, ad 3um).

⁶ *Virtutes morales habitus quidam sunt, quibus vires appetitivae disponuntur ad prompte obediendum rationi* (*Ibid.*, q. 68, a. 3, c).

⁷ *Dona Spiritus Sancti sunt quidam habitus quibus homo perficitur ad prompte obediendum Spiritui Sancto* (*Ibid.*).

works of Saint Thomas, that the promptitude of devotion is intended. And if in addition it is doubtful, as seems probable, whether Saint Thomas limited the notion of devotion to a very well-defined promptitude, prior to his treatment of it in the *Summa*, then the conclusion that he used promptitude and devotion interchangeably in his earlier writings would be very unsound indeed.

The first work of the Angelic Doctor to be considered in tracing his doctrine on devotion is his commentary on the four books of *The Sentences* of Peter Lombard. The natural point at which attention centers is his tract on justice⁸ and more particularly his question on the virtue of religion,⁹ for this is the place in which he treats devotion in the *Summa*. But neither in the article on justice nor in the question on the virtue of religion is the word devotion to be found. And since it is still too soon in this paper to conclude to the use of any expression which Saint Thomas may have considered the equivalent of devotion, there remains the alternative of determining its meaning by the study of its use in other places in the *Commentary on the Sentences*.

2. *Devotion and merit.* In his commentary on the second book of the *Sentences* Saint Thomas, speaking of meriting grace, determines that the degree of merit depends upon three things: the degree of charity and grace; the degree of promptitude or voluntariness; and the difficulty of attaining the object.¹⁰ Since he segregates the promptitude of the will from charity and the degree of charity and places it on a par with that virtue as a necessary determinant of the degree of merit, he seems to require a special promptitude over and above that which charity itself as a habit and a virtue gives to its acts. It is possible, therefore, that even at this early date Saint Thomas began to invest devotion with some of the importance that he assigns to it in the *Summa Theologica*. This possibility is confirmed by the close connection between merit and prayer. And, as shall later appear, Saint Thomas in the *Sentences* links prayer and devotion very clearly together. Against this conclusion, however, is an article on merit in the *Summa* in which Saint Thomas says that the promptitude that increases merit is from charity.¹¹ It is impossible, therefore, to conclude with cer-

⁸ *III Sent.*, d. XXXIII, q. 3, a. 4.

⁹ *Ibid.*, qt. 1.

¹⁰ Quanto voluntas promptior est ad operandum, tanto homo magis meretur. . . . Quanto enim majori charitate et gratia actus informatur, tanto magis est meritorius; similiter etiam quanto magis est voluntarium, plus habet de ratione meriti et laudabilis; similiter etiam quanto magis objectum est arduum, tanto magis est actus meritorius . . . ceteris paribus (*II Sent.*, d. XXIX, q. 1, a. 4).

¹¹ Unicuique est laboriosum et difficile quod non prompta voluntate facit; et talis labor diminuit meritum, et a charitate tollitur (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 114, a. 4,

tainty either that Saint Thomas is or that he is not speaking of devotion in this place.

In distinction XL of *Second Sentences*,¹¹ the word devotion itself occurs for the first time. "She merited before God," says the Angelic Doctor in speaking of the widow who cast into the treasury two brass mites,¹² "a greater reward than those who offered a larger amount with less devotion."¹³ From the use of the word here several things are clear. Devotion is essentially interior and from the will. This is evident from the fact that precisely because of the devotion with which the small offering of the widow is given, it becomes more meritorious than the larger offerings of others. Indeed precisely because of devotion, that which is externally smaller becomes larger than what is offered by the others. It is important, too, to note that devotion is here clearly used in connection with an act of the virtue of religion—contributing to the support of divine worship. Its use, however, still leaves in doubt the solution of two vital questions—the status of devotion as an act, a mode of action, or a general quality of the soul, and the precise meaning of the word devotion itself. It could in this place very well mean fervor, for it is in contrast with tepidity of will spoken of in the same article.¹⁴

3. *Devotion and worship.* Third *Sentences* makes important use of the word devotion in the question on latria¹⁵ and connects devotion intimately with piety. In order to determine the significance of its use here, it will be necessary to understand what meaning Saint Thomas attached to latria and piety in this place. "Latria," he says, "is a species of justice. It concerns itself with the worship due to God, rendering to Him that to which He has a right."¹⁶ But this is the virtue of religion. Saint Thomas allows the conclusion, only reserving that religion is latria under the aspect of determined works of worship to the offering of which man binds

ad 2um). See also *IV Sent.*, d. XV, q. 1, a. 4, qt. 1, ad 2um. Similiter diminutio poenalitatis ex promptitudine voluntatis, quod facit charitas, non diminuit efficaciam satisfactionis, sed auget.

¹¹ I. e., St. Thomas' *Commentary on the Second Book of the Sentences of Peter Lombard*. Hereinafter this condensed form of reference to the different books of the *Sentences* will be employed.

¹² *Lk.* xxi, 1-4.

¹³ Vidua illa plus aliis misisse dicitur, quia efficaciori voluntate illud dedit; unde magis merebatur apud Deum de praemio essentiali quam illi qui majora munera minori devotione dabant (*II Sent.*, d. XL, q. 1, a. 3, ad 5um).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, ad 1um.

¹⁵ *III Sent.*, d. IX, q. 1, a. 1, qt. 4.

¹⁶ Reddere debitum est actus justitiae. Sed latria est cultus Deo debitus; unde exhibet Deo quod ei debetur. Ergo latria est pars justitia (*III Sent.*, d. IX, q. 1, a. 1, Sed Cont. 2).

himself as to that which is God's right.¹⁷ Piety, he here defines, as latria under the aspect of that which is its first effect, namely, devotion.¹⁸ Hence he makes the clear and significant statement that devotion is the first effect of religion, for religion, latria, and piety are here used by Saint Thomas merely as different names for the same virtue.¹⁹ A little later Saint Thomas insists upon the point that piety as it is accepted here consists in devotion toward God to Whom worship is given and in this precisely it differs from the gift of piety. "The gift," Saint Thomas says, "consists in a certain benevolence not limited or judged by human standards but by the divine, and the object of this benevolence is not only God but man also."²⁰ It is curious to think of man being benevolent toward God. Yet in a certain sense man is. Saint Thomas explains in what sense when he says that the virtue of piety has God for its object but God as the giver of all things to Whom a debt is owed. The gift, however, sees God not as a creditor but as one who is worthy of honor in Himself apart from any of His gifts.²¹ By reason of this distinction between the virtue and the gift of piety, the Angelic Doctor has irrevocably linked devotion with the virtue of religion. He has placed devotion in direct antithesis to benevolence and thus orientated its essential note as one of obligation and servitude. Besides confirming what he has already determined—that devotion is interior, from the will, and pertaining essentially to the virtue of religion—he has added here the important notion that devotion is the first effect of religion. But he leaves unanswered, for the present, the question of the nature of the effect. Is it an act, a mode of action, or a disposition of the soul? Is it restricted in its meaning to promptitude in the service of God, or does it include all that the notion of service includes?

4. *Devotion and the Sacraments.* In the Fourth Book of

¹⁷ Latria dicitur religio quantum ad determinationem operum ad quae homo se obligando in cultum Dei determinat (*Ibid.*, qt. 4).

¹⁸ Latria dicitur pietas quantum ad effectum devotionis, quod primum occurrit (*Ibid.*).

¹⁹ Quandoque latria sumitur pro habitu quo exhibetur obsequium. Hoc modo est virtus. Et nominatur haec virtus quatuor nominibus . . . pietas . . . theosebeia . . . latria . . . religio (*Ibid.*).

²⁰ Pietas secundum quod donum, consistit in quadam benevolentia supra modum humanum ad omnes; sed pietas, secundum quod hic accipitur, consistit in quadam devotione ad Deum, cui latria exhibetur (*Ibid.*, ad 4um).

²¹ Quamvis pietas virtus quae latria dicitur, ipsi Deo exhibeatur; in hoc tamen accipit aliquid humanum pro mensura, scilicet beneficium a Deo acceptum, ratione cuius est debitor ei; sed pietas quae est donum, accipit in hoc aliquid divinum pro mensura, ut scilicet Deo honorem impendat, non quia sit ei debitus, sed quia Deus honore dignus est . . . (*III Sent.*, d. XXXIV, q. 3, a. 2, qt. 1, ad 1um).

Sentences, the thread of devotion is picked up again in the tract on the sacraments. Does its place here imply a retrogression from Saint Thomas' doctrine in *Third Sentences*? He has already bound up devotion with religion in a manner that will require a complete about face to change. What have the sacraments to do with the virtue of religion? It will be legitimate in answering this question to have recourse to the *Summa Theologica*, for although Saint Thomas does not express the doctrine of the *Summa* on this point in the *Sentences*, yet the fact that he gives devotion so much attention in the tract on the sacraments in the *Sentences* is proof unquestionable that his doctrine on this point was constant. In his prologue to the tract on exterior acts of worship in the *Summa*, Saint Thomas says that these acts are of three kinds—those by which man offers to God his own body, namely, adoration; those by which he offers his external possessions, for example, sacrifice and oblation; and finally those by which something that is already God's is used by man in his worship of God.²² In the special prologue to his discussion of this last class of acts, the Angelic Doctor says that these are of two kinds, the sacraments and the divine name itself.²³ And in the *Summa* as in the *Sentences*, he reserves the treatment of the sacraments, because of their immense importance to man, to a special place. But that he sees them as the material for acts of worship is evident and thus his repeated insistence on devotion in his treatment of the sacraments in *Fourth Sentences*, far from weakening his doctrine on the connection between religion and devotion, gives to it overwhelming confirmation.

a) The first mention of devotion in *Fourth Sentences* occurs in the question on the equality or inequality of the grace received in Baptism. Saint Thomas there says that those who receive Baptism better prepared than others in faith and devotion receive greater grace.²⁴ To the question that naturally arises whether, then, devotion is the cause of grace, Saint Thomas answers immediately and in his answer for the first time places devotion

²² Postea considerandum est de exterioribus actibus latriaе,—et primo de adoratione, per quam aliquis suum corpus ad Deum venerandum exhibet; secundo de illis actibus quibus aliquid de rebus exterioribus Deo offertur; tertio de actibus quibus ea quae Dei sunt, assumuntur (*Summa Theol.*, II-II, Prologus ad Quaest. LXXXIV).

²³ Deinde considerandum est de actibus exterioribus latriaе, quibus aliquid divinum ab hominibus assumitur, quod est vel sacramentum aliquod, vel ipsum nomen divinum (*Ibid.*, Prologus ad Quaest. LXXXIX).

²⁴ . . . quia tamen quidam ad baptismum cum majori praeparatione fidei et devotionis accedunt quam alii; ideo quidam aliis majorem gratiam consequuntur (*IV Sent.*, d. IV, q. 2, a. 3, qt. 2).

in a category of being. "Devotion," he says, "is not an efficient co-cause with Baptism in the production of grace in the soul of the person baptized. It is rather a material disposition to the reception of Baptism, and thus according to its difference in different persons the effect of Baptism is participated."²⁵ He seems to be picturing Baptism as a form coming to matter that is more or less perfectly disposed, much in the same manner in which the soul comes as the substantial form of the body in man. And it is interesting to recall how much importance Saint Thomas attaches to the more or less perfect disposition of the matter with regard to the ultimate perfection of that which results from the union of the matter and the form. For it is his doctrine that the substantially greater perfection of one person over another is due to the more perfect disposition of the matter into which the soul is infused, because the soul as a form is received according to the capacity of the recipient.²⁶ Hence devotion is the material cause of the grace received in Baptism. By reason of its inherence in a subject, it is an accidental and not a substantial entity. It is not merely the negative removal of the impediment of sin that would impede the effect of baptism but a positive disposition which, according as it is greater or less, is the material cause of a greater or less infusion of grace in the soul.²⁷

In the succeeding question Saint Thomas again mentions the necessity of devotion in those who receive baptism. He says that it is necessary for anyone who is to receive the effect of any agent to be properly disposed for the reception of that effect. And he distinguishes between the reception of the sacrament itself, by which he seems to mean reception of the character of the sacrament, and the reception of the principal effect of the sacrament which is, of course, as in all the sacraments, grace. It is important to note that he requires devotion on the part of the recipient both for the reception of the sacrament itself and for the reception of its principal effect. With regard to the sacrament itself, he says that in all action, contact between the agent and the thing acted upon is

²⁵ *Devotio baptizati non additur quasi concausa, ut efficienter agat ad gratiae receptionem, sed additur quasi dispositio materialis: et ideo secundum diversitatem ipsius participatur baptismi effectus (IV Sent., d. IV, q. 2, a. 3, qt. 2, ad 1um).*

²⁶ *Manifestum est quod quanto corpus est melius dispositum tanto meliorem sortitur animam cujus ratio est, quia actus et forma recipitur in materia secundum materiae capacitatem (Summa Theol., I. q. 85, a. 7, c).*

²⁷ *Quando adultus baptizatur non solum requiritur ad percipiendum baptismi effectum removens prohibens, scilicet, fictionem, sed et requiritur dispositio quasi materialis, scilicet, devotio et fides recipientis baptismi; et secundum quod magis vel minus invenitur dispositus, effectus baptismi diversimode consequitur (IV Sent., d. IV, q. 2, a. 3, qt., ad 2um).*

necessary. Thus in baptism the recipient must in some way be joined to the sacrament which is to produce in him certain effects. This is accomplished in the intellect by faith and in the will by devotion.²⁸ His principle is merely a statement of the fact that when an agent is to act upon something the thing must in some way be present to it.²⁹ It is devotion, then, that makes contact between the sacrament and the will of man. It does so, as has been seen, not only by removing impediments to the sacrament but by positively disposing to its worthy reception. The effect of the sacrament also depends upon devotion. Faith purifies the heart; contrition removes the impediment of sin. "But contrition," says Saint Thomas, "is included in devotion."³⁰ Has Saint Thomas reference here to the important work of the virtue of religion in imperating the other virtues or does he consider contrition to be properly a part of devotion without the need of religion becoming imperative in making it so? The answer to this question can be better given later when Saint Thomas begins to speak of actual devotion. The linking of faith and devotion as the two prerequisites to baptism should be noted in passing. This point is also cleared up in the explanation of what Saint Thomas understood by actual devotion.

The last time that the Angelic Doctor speaks of devotion in this passage on the sacrament of baptism, he decides that Saint Augustine uses the word devotion in a special sense and not as it is generally understood. "Saint Augustine," he says, "understood devotion in baptism as the intention of receiving the sacrament in its entirety both with regard to the sacrament itself and with regard to the effect of the sacrament. The lack, in the person being baptized, of devotion in this sense is always a mortal sin." "But," he goes on to say, "the lack of devotion inasmuch as it implies the fervor of charity in reverence to God and the things of God is not always a mortal sin."³¹ In other words, he seems to say that de-

²⁸ Quia autem omnis actio est per contactum ideo necessarium est quod recipiens sacramentum quodammodo contingat ipsum: et per intellectum, quem quidem contactum facit fides: et per affectum quem contactum facit devotio: et ideo indispositus reputatur et qui non credit et qui indevotus accedit (*Ibid.*, q. 3, a. 2, qt. 2).

²⁹ Nullius agentis quantumcumque virtuosi, actio procedit ad aliquid distans, nisi in quantum in illud per media agit (*Summa Theol.*, I, q. 8, a. 1, ad 3um).

³⁰ Et ideo Ambrosius dicit (super *Rom.* ii, "sine poenitentia sunt dona Dei et vocatio") quod non sunt necessaria ex hac parte (that is for the reception of the effect of baptism) nisi fides et contritio, tamen contritio etiam in devotione includitur (*IV Sent.*, d. IV, q. 3, a. 2, qt. 2).

³¹ Devotio hic [i. e., in Saint Augustine's, *De Baptismo contra Donatist.*, cap. 53, l. 7], accipitur voluntas consequendi baptismum totaliter et quantum ad sacramentum et quantum ad rem sacramenti, et hujus devotionis defectus non potest sine peccato

votion is the fervor of charity in worship. It is not to be concluded at once that devotion is here described as a mode of the virtue of charity. First of all, Saint Thomas has said that devotion properly has to do with the virtue of religion and he must not be accused without good reason of being in a state of indecision with regard to its true character. Moreover he says here that devotion is the fervor of charity *in worship*, and worship, of course, belongs to the virtue of religion. But why does he use the expression "fervor of charity" with regard to devotion? The explanation seems to lie in the supreme imperation of every virtue by the virtue of charity.³² As the highest virtue, charity uses all the virtues for its own end, which is the highest end—the attainment of God as He is in Himself.³³ And thus Saint Thomas can speak of the fervor of charity in worship because of the fact that charity uses worship in such a way that an act of worship, while still remaining an act of worship, becomes an act of charity by reordination to the end of charity.

b) Saint Thomas next speaks of devotion in his treatment of the sacrament of the Eucharist. "He alone receives the sacrament spiritually," he says, "who has faith in and charity toward Christ together with devotion and the desire to receive the sacrament even though he does not do so sacramentally."³⁴ Worthy of note here again is the linking of devotion with faith and with charity. In the answer to one of the objections in the same place, the Angelic Doctor insists that in this sacrament also, as in baptism, a greater infusion of grace is received by one who receives the sacrament with devotion.³⁵ A little further on, following Saint Bernard, Saint Thomas makes devotion to hearing the word of God a conjectural sign of freedom from sin.³⁶

mortali esse: quamvis defectus devotionis prout importat fervorem charitatis in reverentia Dei et divinorum possit esse sine peccato mortali (*IV Sent.*, d. IV, q. 3, a. 2, qt. 2, ad 3um).

³² Motus humanae mentis ad fruitionem divini boni est proprius actus charitatis, per quem omnes actus aliarum virtutum ordinantur in hunc finem, secundum quod aliae virtutes imperantur a charitate (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 114, a. 4, c).

³³ Caritas attingit ipsum Deum, ut in ipso sistat (*Ibid.*, II-II, q. 23, a. 6, c).

³⁴ Manducat spiritualiter hoc sacramentum [that is, the Eucharist] solum ille qui habet fidem et charitatem ad Christum cum devotione et proposito sumendi hoc sacramentum etiam si sacramentaliter non manducet (*IV Sent.*, d. IX, q. 1, a. 2, qt. 4).

³⁵ . . . qui spiritualiter manducavit in proposito et devotione habuit manducationem sacramentalem, ad quam accedens ex ipsa vi sacramenti majorem gratiam consequitur: unde non sequitur quod sacramentalis manducatio superfluat (*Ibid.*, ad 1um).

³⁶ Potest tamen de hoc [that is, of freedom from sin] haberi aliqua conjectura, praecipue per quattuor signa, sicut Bernardus dicit. (Bernardus in *Sermone Septua-*

In the twelfth distinction, which continues to treat of the sacrament of the Eucharist, Saint Thomas emphasizes the necessity of actual devotion. He has determined in speaking of baptism that devotion is like a material disposition that receives the form or the sacrament in a manner analogous to the way the body receives the soul in man. Here he insists upon actual devotion.

The acquiring of any perfection is impeded by the taking away of the disposition proper to it. Material dispositions have the same relation to the form as an act has to its end. Hence actual devotion is necessary in the reception of the Eucharist in order that it produce the fullness of its effect, for this sacrament perfects man by uniting him in a special way with his end. And because without mortal sin, actual devotion can sometimes be impeded by reason of distraction or venial sins, which destroy the acts of the virtues, it follows that the effect of the Eucharist can sometimes be impeded with no guilt of mortal sin involved, so that grace is not increased in the recipient.³⁷

In order to show that devotion must become actual in order to produce the fullness of its effect, Saint Thomas has here made use of the principle that the end informs and specifies the act.³⁸ The end is the form of the act as the soul is the form of the body. And because the Eucharist is like an end in that it joins man in an ineffable way with his end, the matter which it is to inform, so to speak, must be not a disposition merely but a disposition actualized. So that the habitual devotion sufficient for the reception of the sacrament itself, and even, to a certain extent, for the effect of the sacrament (for the sacraments cause grace of themselves), is not sufficient for the fullness and superabundance of the effect. Actual devotion is required for this. Does this doctrine make of devotion a special act? It does not seem so. Saint Thomas still retains the conception that devotion is a material disposition. But

gesimae, circa med.) Primo, cum quis devote verba Dei audit; quia qui est ex Deo, verba Dei audit (*John viii*) (*Ibid.*, a. 3, qt. 2).

³⁷ Omnis perfectio impeditur per remotionem propriae dispositionis. Sicut autem dispositiones materiales se habent ad perfectionem formae, ita actus se habet ad perfectionem finis: unde cum hoc sacramentum perficiat conjungendo fini . . . ad hoc quod effectum suum plene habeat in sumente, oportet quod adsit actualis devotio. Et quia interdum absque mortali peccato actualis devotio impediri potest, cum distractiones variae ipsam impediunt, et peccata venialia virtutum actum tollant, absque peccato mortali potest effectus hujus sacramenti [that is, the Eucharist] impediri: ita quod aliquis augmentum gratiae non consequantur (*IV Sent.*, d. XII, q. 2, a. 1, qt. 3).

³⁸ Sicut res naturalis habet speciem ex sua forma ita actio habet speciem ex objecto (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 18, a. 2, c). Objectum habet quodammodo rationem formae, in quantum dat speciem (*Ibid.*, ad 2um).

he adds here that it must become actual at times. It would appear to be reasonably evident from this that Saint Thomas considers devotion insofar as it is a disposition, to be a general condition or state of the soul resulting from the presence of many virtues and chiefly ordained to the ultimate end of all the moral virtues, namely, the worship of God, which comprises the proper object of the virtue of religion. For the virtue of religion is the highest moral virtue, having for its object the highest object that any virtue can have except it be one of the theological virtues, which have God for their object. And thus it follows that although religion falls far short of the dignity of the theological virtues, it is the connecting link between them and the other moral virtues, because, while it has not for its object, God, it has the next best thing—the worship of God.³⁹ Such a disposition or condition of the soul would, of course, become actual by eliciting an act that partook of the mode of all the virtues combining to bring about this disposition, this devotion in the soul. An act of love of God, for example, that was full of faith, hope, and humility and ordained to the worship of God, would seem to be as close an approach as possible to what Saint Thomas must have understood by actual devotion. And because it was ordained to the worship of God, such an act would be an act not of faith, nor of hope, nor of humility, nor even of charity, but an act of religion.

A little further on in this place, Saint Thomas distinguishes between the impediment placed to this sacrament by mortal sin and that which is placed by venial sin. He has reference again to the principle that the sacraments give grace of themselves if mortal sin is not in the soul as an obstacle. Here is to be found his statement that this quality of the soul called devotion is the result not of the presence of all the virtues but rather of certain specific ones closely connected with the virtue of religion and the sacrament of the Eucharist. “Not every venial sin,” he says, “impedes the effect of this sacrament but only that which takes away the actual devotion that is required in its reception.”⁴⁰ What these virtues are in particular can be determined with a satisfactory degree of

³⁹ Religio magis de propinquo accedit ad Deum quam aliae virtutes morales, in quantum operatur ea quae directe et immediate ordinantur in honorem divinum. Et ideo religio praeeminet inter alias virtutes morales (*Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 6, c).

⁴⁰ Quamvis peccatum veniale non faciat fictum simpliciter, facit tamen fictum quoad aliquid, nec tamen dicendum quod omne peccatum veniale impediatur effectum huius sacramenti, sed solum illud quod tollit actualem devotionem quae exigitur in hoc sacramento (*IV Sent.*, d. XII, q. 2, a. 1, qt. 3, ad 1um).

accuracy both from the nature of the sacrament of the Eucharist itself and from the virtues that Saint Thomas has mentioned in connection with the sacrament and with devotion. Reception of the sacrament of the Eucharist postulates first of all, faith. For this sacrament is in a special way the sacrament of faith. Man is required in this one case alone in the whole of the universe to deny the testimony of his senses and to adhere solely by faith to the word of God.

Sight, touch and taste in Thee are each deceived
The ear alone most safely is believed.

.
The Godhead only, on the cross lay hid from view
But here lies hid at once the manhood too,
And I in both professing my belief. . . .⁴¹

Secondly the sacrament of the Eucharist is, as Saint Thomas has called it, "the pledge of future glory," and its recipient must have the virtue of hope.⁴² Again the sacrament of Eucharist is the sacrament of love and as such requires charity in the one receiving it.

O Loving Pelican, O Jesu Lord. . . .⁴³

Fourthly, both because the Eucharist is a sacrament and because it is a sacrifice, it is part of the worship man gives to God. So it requires the virtue of religion.

O Godhead hid devoutly I adore Thee
Who truly art within the forms before me. . . .⁴⁴

And finally, the sacrament of the Eucharist is the sacrament of humility, in which Christ hides not only his divine nature but His humanity as well, and comes to man as food and drink. So man in receiving Him must have the virtue of humility.

To Thee I bow my head with bended knee
As failing quite in contemplating Thee.⁴⁵

Saint Thomas may have included other virtues in his concept of the material disposition which he called devotion, but it seems reasonably certain that these five, faith, hope, charity, religion and humility, were first. The number of times, too, that Saint Thomas has linked faith and charity with devotion is significant in the light of this conclusion. In this regard, it is interesting to note a state-

⁴¹ *Adoro Te*. Trans. by Brian Higgins.

⁴² *O sacrum convivium . . . et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur. (Magnificat Antiphon, Second Vespers, Feast of Corpus Christi).*

⁴³ *Adoro Te*.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

ment the Angelic Doctor makes in the *Summa Theologica* when speaking of prayer. For, as shall be seen, he certainly considered prayer an act of religion even in the *Sentences*. He says in the *Summa*: "Prayer proceeds ultimately from charity, mediately, however, through the virtue of religion of which it is an act, and helped by other virtues which are necessary to its perfection, namely, by faith and by humility."⁴⁶ Thus with regard to the statement made here, it can readily be seen that there are many venial sins, sins especially of weakness as opposed to sins of malice, whose presence in the soul would not hinder the actual devotion which would be the result of the material disposition in the soul. But above all, the fact must not be lost sight of that whatever Saint Thomas considered the particular makeup of devotion to be, he always related it to the virtue of religion. Devotion either as a disposition or as actualized was always ordained to the worship of God and so a part of the highest moral virtue, the virtue of religion.

In the next article, Saint Thomas again stresses the importance of devotion in taking away venial sin, insisting not only that it is devotion that remits it, but that the measure of remission is exactly proportional to the measure of devotion.⁴⁷ And he implies what he plainly expresses a few lines further on, that the Eucharist not only increases habitual grace but also actual devotion.⁴⁸ This is evidently true, not only because the increase of grace intensifies the infused virtues which depend upon it, but also because the acts themselves of the virtues so specially connected with the reception of the Eucharist are aroused by the consideration of the love of God for men that the sacrament implies.

The Eucharist is not only a sacrament but also a sacrifice; it is worthy of note that Saint Thomas makes its satisfactory value depend upon the devotion with which it is offered.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ *Procedit oratio a charitate, mediante religione, cujus est actus oratio, concomitantibus etiam quibusdam aliis virtutibus quae ad bonitatem orationis requiruntur, scilicet, humilitate et fide (Summa Theol., II-II, q. 83, a. 15, c).*

⁴⁷ *Tantus potest esse devotionis fervor quod omnia peccata venialia delet: neque est inconueniens quod aliqua hora homo sit absque omni peccato veniali, quamvis hoc diu durare non possit propter difficultatem vitandi peccata venialia, nec tamen oportet, quod semper omnia peccata venialia delet, sed secundum mensuram devotionis quia non est proximus effectus ejus [that is, the sacrament of the Eucharist] deletio venialium, sed ex consequenti (IV Sent., d. XII, q. 2, a. 2, qt. 1, ad 1um).*

⁴⁸ *In hoc sacramento non solum confertur gratia habitualis, sed excitatur fervor actualis devotionis; et ideo gratiae hujus sacramenti non solum mortalia sed etiam venialia opponuntur (Ibid., ad 2um).*

⁴⁹ *In quantum Eucharistia est sacrificium accipit rationem satisfactionis: et secundum hoc in parte vel in toto poena tollit, sicut et aliae satisfactiones secundum*

In a striking comparison between the effect upon the body of heat and labor and the effect upon the soul of concupiscence and preoccupation with external affairs, Saint Thomas shows that just as the former destroy the natural moisture of the body and are counteracted by the taking of food, so concupiscence and preoccupation with externals destroy the devotion and fervor of the soul by which God is worshiped. And they are counteracted by the spiritual food received in the sacrament of the Eucharist.⁵⁰

The Angelic Doctor fittingly concludes his treatment of the necessity of devotion to the sacrament of the Eucharist by the observation that in the primitive Church devotion flourished more because of the propinquity of that period to the passion of Christ.⁵¹ For the passion of Christ was the great and perfect act of worship of God. All sacrifice before it looked forward to it and prefigured it. And all sacrifice since is worthy of the name and enjoys efficacy only because of and in the measure that it is united with it.

5. *Devotion and Prayer.* Saint Thomas gives as much place to devotion in his treatment of prayer in the Commentary on the *Sentences* as he gave it in his questions on Baptism and the Eucharist. He begins by making devotion the defense for public prayer.

Public prayer should be vocal as well as mental in order that the prayer that is expressed by the voice may excite others to devotion and to perseverance in their intention in prayer. It was for this reason that the chant of the church was instituted.⁵²

But even in private prayer the voice is used to bring about devotion and then, because movements in the superior appetite, if they are strong enough, overflow into the inferior faculties, it often happens that devotion causes

mensuram poenae debitae pro peccato et devotionis qua sacramentum offertur (*Ibid.*, qt. 3).

⁵⁰ Ea quae in hoc sacramento geruntur, habent similitudinem cum his quae accidunt in corporali nutrimento. Quia enim fit quasi continua deperditio naturalis humiditatis per actionem caloris naturalis, et exercitium laboris, ideo oportet frequenter corporalem cibum assumere ad restaurationem deperditi ne deperditio continua mortem inducat. Similiter etiam ex concupiscentia innata, et occupatione circa exteriora fit deperditio devotionis, et fervoris, secundum quae homo in Deum colligitur: unde oportet quod pluries deperdita restaurentur, ne homo totaliter alienetur a Deo (*IV Sent.*, d. XV, q. 3, a. 1, qt. 1).

⁵¹ In primitiva Ecclesia vigeat devotio major ex propinquitate passionis Christi (*Ibid.*, qt. 3).

⁵² Oratio publica . . . non debet solum esse mentalis sed vocalis etiam, ut per orationem voce expressam etiam alii ad devotionem excitentur et ad continuandum intentionem suam orantibus, et propter hoc etiam cantus ab ecclesia instituti sunt (*Ibid.*, q. 4, a. 2, qt. 1).

the one who is praying to break into audible words, and weeping, and sighs, and expressions of joy.⁵³

He makes devotion the yardstick of prayer. "The thing to be considered principally in prayer is devotion," he says, "and if devotion can be sustained over a long period, then the period of prayer ought to be extended. If, however, prayer causes distaste or weariness, it is not to be protracted."⁵⁴ By devotion, as has been seen, Saint Thomas understood a spiritual quality and not a sensible feeling, and hence the distaste and weariness to which he opposes devotion are to be understood as a distaste and weariness of the will and not merely of the lower faculties and the body. Such a distaste is not, of course, to be confused with the sadness about divine things of which Saint Thomas speaks in the *Summa Theologica*,⁵⁵ and which he opposes to the virtue of charity.

"An exordium or introduction to prayer is sometimes required," Saint Thomas says, "to excite in the one who is praying a desire to pray devoutly." He contrasts this exordium to the introduction of speeches in which the audience was praised in order that it might be moved to give greater attention to the message that was to follow. The exordium in prayer has for its purpose the arousing of devotion in the person who is praying. "This devotion," he continues, "is aroused as by an exordium in two ways—first, by praising God, and secondly, by recognizing our own weakness."⁵⁶

There are other places in which Saint Thomas speaks of devotion in his treatment of prayer but since these add nothing new to the doctrine, it will be unnecessary to study them in particular.

There are, however, several statements regarding prayer, religion and devotion that add confirmation and clarity to what has already been said. In the fifth article of this question, Saint Thomas

⁵³ Vox orationi adjungitur [in private prayer] propter quattuor. Primo, ut homo excitet seipsum verbis ad devote orandum. . . . Tertia, ex vehementia devotionis in orante vox sequitur quia motus superiorum virium, si sit fortis, etiam ad inferiores redundat: unde et cum mens orantis per devotionem accenditur, in fletus et suspiria, et jubilos, et voces inconsiderare prorumpit (*Ibid.*).

⁵⁴ In oratione praecipue attenditur orantis devotio, et ideo tantum debet oratio protendi, quantum devotio orantis conservari potest: et ideo si diu possit devotio conservari, debet oratio esse diuturna et prolixa. Si autem prolixitas fastidium, vel taedium pariat oratio non est diutius protrahenda (*Ibid.*, qt. 2).

⁵⁵ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 35.

⁵⁶ . . . exordium requiritur in oratione quantum ad excitandum orantis desiderium ad devote petendum. . . . Unde dupliciter oratio affectus ad devotionem quasi quodam exordio excitatur, scilicet, ex parte Dei, dum ipsum laudamus: et ex parte nostra, dum nostram infirmitatem recogitamus . . . (*IV Sent.*, d. XV, q. 4, a. 3, qt. 2).

declares with finality that prayer is an act of worship.⁵⁷ And when this statement is taken in conjunction with another which follows shortly after, considerable light will be brought to bear upon what the Angelic Doctor meant by actual devotion. He determines the difference between prayer that is meritorious and prayer that is efficacious in obtaining that which is requested. "All the prayers of one who is in the state of grace and charity are meritorious," he says, "but they do not always obtain what is requested, because frequently this is opposed to the designs of divine Providence."⁵⁸ He admits however, that it is possible so to pray that the thing asked for will certainly be obtained. And he places four conditions that make its being answered infallibly certain. They are that one pray piously, for himself, perseveringly, and for that which is conducive to his salvation. He goes on to give the reason for the first condition. One must pray piously because if he prays inordinately he places an impediment to the probability of his prayer being answered. "To pray piously," he continues, "is to remove this impediment to effective prayer. For the word *piously* itself implies a mode or manner of worship, as evidence of which, worship under one aspect is called piety."⁵⁹ It has been seen that the aspect under which worship is called piety is that of its first effect, namely, devotion. And Saint Thomas goes on to say that prayer in order to be effective ought to be modified or qualified by this mode of worship which he calls piety, and, as has been seen, which he makes synonymous with devotion.⁶⁰ Since he is speaking of prayer, it is evident that the devotion to which he has reference is actual devotion, for prayer itself is an act. Thus with fair exactitude, Saint Thomas describes devotion as a mode or manner of worship. And in the answer to one of the objections in this place, he is even more specific, saying that this piety of which he speaks includes all the circumstances of virtue which are necessary on the part of the one who is praying in order that he produce a perfect prayer.⁶¹

⁵⁷ *Oratio est actus latriae (Ibid., a. 5, qt. 1, ad 2um).*

⁵⁸ *Unde patet quod oratio ex charitate semper habet efficaciam merendi sed non semper habet efficaciam impetrandi, quia aliquid est quod repugnat impetrationi in providentia, Dei, ad quem oratur (Ibid., a. 7, qt. 3).*

⁵⁹ *Ad haec impedimenta tollenda ponuntur quattuor conditiones praemissae (scilicet, ut petantur pie, et pro se, et perseveranter, et ad salutem), quibus positae semper habet oratio efficaciam impetrandi. Potest ergo impedimentum orationis esse vel ex parte orantis, si orationem inordinate emittat, et quantum ad hoc removendum dicitur, pie, in quo importatur modus latriae, quae alio nomine pietas dicitur . . . (Ibid., q. 4, a. 7, qt. 3).*

⁶⁰ . . . *secundum quod (i. e., secundum modum latriae quae dicitur pietas) oratio modificari debet . . . (Ibid.).*

⁶¹ *Omnes illae conditiones quae requiruntur ex parte orantis in quantum est orans*

6. *A summary.* The summit of Saint Thomas' teaching on devotion in the *Sentences* has been reached and it will be useful at this point to recapitulate briefly the conclusions that have been drawn in the course of tracing his doctrine. It has been seen that devotion is interior and from the will; that it is an effect, and indeed the first effect, of the virtue of religion; that it is a material disposition necessary to other acts of religion, eminent among which are prayer and the sacraments; that this material disposition must at times be actualized and that when so actualized, it takes on—although still retaining its essential relationship to religion—a special relationship to certain virtues that are necessary to the more perfect reception of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist; and finally it has been seen that actual devotion is specifically a mode of the virtue of religion and as applied to prayer is a summation of all the virtues and their circumstances that are required on the part of the one praying in the offering of a perfect prayer.

Even here in the Commentary on the *Sentences*, Saint Thomas sees the necessity of unifying the vast quantity of doctrine on devotion that tradition had passed down to him. He sees first of all that devotion must be essentially linked with worship and that any division that puts devotion into two distinct categories must be avoided. Some slight hint of the unification he is to accomplish can be seen in his calling devotion the *first* effect of religion. The influence of Saint Albert is evident in Thomas' doctrine that devotion is a disposition. His own future doctrine is foreshadowed when he speaks of the necessity of actualizing this disposition. And his final effort at unification of the whole traditional teaching on devotion (resulting in a doctrine which he abandons in the *Summa*) is observable in his description of devotion as a mode which includes all the circumstances of virtue necessary to perfect prayer.

II. SAINT THOMAS' CONCEPT OF DEVOTION IN THE COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLES OF SAINT PAUL, IN DE MALO, AND IN THE COMMENTARY ON DIONYSIUS' "DE DIVINIS NOMINIBUS"

1. *The Commentary on the Epistles.* In the time intervening between his Commentary on the *Sentences* and his Commentary on the *Epistles of Saint Paul*, Saint Thomas speaks of devotion in his *Expositio super Dionysium*, "De Divinis Nominibus." But since he mentions it only once and that in a context from which little can be gathered, it will be more profitable to leave this passage for later

includuntur in hoc quod dicit, pie, quod includit omnes circumstantias virtutis, quibus ordinatur actus ex parte agentis (*Ibid.*, ad 6um).

treatment and to proceed at once to a consideration of devotion in his *Commentary on the Epistles of Saint Paul*.

Since the *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* was written about ten years later than any other of the epistolary commentaries in which devotion is mentioned, a closer approach to the chronological development of the Angelic Doctor's teaching on devotion will obtain if *Romans* is considered after the other Epistles.

a) In explaining the words of Saint Paul in the *First Epistle to the Corinthians* regarding those who eat the bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily being guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord,⁶² Saint Thomas mentions three ways in which the Sacrament of the Eucharist can be received unworthily. The second of these ways concerns the sin of indevotion.

The second way in which the Eucharist may be received unworthily is that of receiving the Sacrament without devotion. This indevotion may be only venial, as when someone receives the Eucharist while his mind is distracted by secular business, though he retains his habitual devotion to the sacrament. The effect of this sin of indevotion is to impede the fruit of the Sacrament which is spiritual refreshment. It does not make the person guilty of the body and blood of the Lord in the sense in which the Apostle speaks here. But there is a sin of indevotion that is mortal. And he commits it who holds the Sacrament in contempt.⁶³

It is clear from these words of Saint Thomas that he is speaking of devotion as a prerequisite disposition to the reception of the Sacrament. He confirms the doctrine of the *Sentences* regarding the result of indevotion in the reception of Baptism. The distinction here between habitual devotion which cannot be absent without mortal sin and actual devotion which may be impeded by venial sin, is very clear.

In the fourteenth chapter of the same Epistle, Saint Paul says (verse 14): "If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is without fruit." Saint Thomas in determining what the fruit of prayer is says that it is twofold: first merit, and secondly spiritual consolation and devotion.⁶⁴ Devotion is, there-

⁶² XI, 27.

⁶³ Secundo ex hoc quod aliquis non devota mente accedit ad Eucharistiam: quae quidem indevotio quandoque est veniale: puta cum aliquis distracta mente ad saecularia negotia, accedit ad hoc sacramentum habitualiter retinens debitam reverentiam ad ipsum: et talis indevotio licet impediatur fructum hujus sacramenti, qui est spiritualis refectio, non tamen facit reum corporis et sanguinis Domini, sicut hic Apostolus loquitur. Quaedam vero indevotio est peccatum mortale, quae scilicet, est cum contemptu hujus sacramenti (*Super Iam Epist. S. Pauli ad Cor., Cap. xi, Lect. 7*).

⁶⁴ Dicendum est quod duplex est fructus orationis. Unus fructus est meritum

fore, the result of prayer. This is evidently a use of the word in a sense different from any that has thus far been determined. And it will be well at this point to define clearly the connotations which the Angelic Doctor gives to the word devotion. The first sense in which he employed the word was that of a material quality or disposition of the will, a prerequisite to acts of worship, especially prayer and the reception of the sacraments. It has been seen that in speaking of Baptism in the *Commentary on the Sentences* Saint Thomas distinguished the devotion that is required for the valid reception of the sacrament and whose absence in the one being baptized is always a mortal sin, from devotion as it implies the fervor of charity, the lack of which is not always a mortal sin but which is required for the reception of the effect of the sacrament in its fullness and superabundance.⁶⁵ He has just made the same distinction in commenting on the eleventh chapter of this Epistle.⁶⁶ Hence the devotion which is a prerequisite to prayer is twofold. Here in the commentary on chapter fourteen, he describes a devotion that is, as has been said, an effect or fruit of prayer. It is the consolation or fruit which repairs and restores the spirit.⁶⁷ It is important to note that this devotion is a spiritual thing and not a sensible feeling.⁶⁸ In a third connotation however, Saint Thomas uses the word devotion to denominate a sensible feeling. It is in this sense that he employed it in speaking of prayer in the *Commentary on the Sentences* when he made the arousing of devotion the reason for public prayer. He says in that place that this sensible devotion is caused by the overflow from the powerful movement of the superior appetite, that is, the will. Hence it is the spiritual devotion resulting from prayer that is the cause of this sensible devotion. And sensible devotion in turn reacts upon prayer itself by way of a disposition, making prayer easy and delightful. Saint Thomas has, then, used devotion in connection with prayer in three senses: as it is a prerequisite to prayer; as it is an effect of prayer; and as it is a sensible feeling caused by the redundancy of devotion in the will. It is in the second sense that he uses the word here in the fourteenth chapter of *First Corinthians* and he lays emphasis upon several of its features—that it is born of prayer, that it is something spiritual, and that it recreates and refreshes the

quod homini provenit; alius fructus est spiritualis consolatio et devotio concepta ex oratione (*Ibid.*, Cap. xiv, Lect. 3).

⁶⁵ Vide p. 418, *supra*.

⁶⁶ Vide, p. 428, *supra*.

⁶⁷ Id quod dicit Apostolus: Mens est sine fructu, intelligitur de fructu refectionis (*Ibid.*).

⁶⁸ Et quantum ad fructum devotionis *spiritualis* privatur qui non attendit ad ea quae orat, seu non intelligit (*Ibid.*).

soul. It is not a necessary effect of prayer. Prayer is meritorious without it.⁶⁹ It arises from attention to and understanding of what is said in prayer, although slavish attention even to the sense of the words if the end is forgotten impedes it.⁷⁰ From all this it is clear that the Angelic Doctor speaks here of devotion as the spiritual joy (*laetitia, allégresse*) that is caused by prayer and he himself removes all doubt of the fact when he speaks of devotion in this second sense as synonymous with spiritual consolation and refreshment.

b) In commenting on the passage where Saint Paul in the *Second Epistle to the Corinthians* exhorts them not to receive the grace of God in vain but to exhibit themselves as the ministers of God,⁷¹ Saint Thomas distinguishes three ways in which this is to be done: in exterior works; by greater devotion; and by shunning the company of infidels.⁷² The expression "ministers of God" is to be noted in connection with devotion, for this refers devotion again to the virtue of religion. The use of the phrase, "how this is to be done," indicates that Saint Thomas still considers devotion, to be a quality of the soul which gives its mode to the virtue of religion. He treats in particular all three ways in which the Corinthians are to exhibit themselves as ministers of God and when he comes to the treatment of devotion it is at once apparent that he is speaking of devotion as it is the spiritual joy caused by prayer. "The Apostle instructs the Corinthians in this place," he says, "about the use of the grace they have received with regard to interior devotion which consists in gladness of heart and which causes openness or greatness of heart."⁷³ It is important here to note that God by his grace is the first cause of devotion. Devotion is a part of the grace which

⁶⁹ Et ideo dicendum est quod quando orans aliquando divertit ab his quae dicit, seu quando quis in uno opere meritorio non continue cogitat in quolibet actu, quod facit hoc propter Deum, non perdit rationem meriti (*Ibid.*).

⁷⁰ Sed sciendum est quod triplex est attentio. Una est ad verba quae homo dicit, et haec aliquando nocet, inquantum impedit devotionem; alia est ad sensum verborum, et haec nocet, non tamen est multum nociva; tertia est ad finem, et haec est melior et quasi necessaria (*Ibid.*).

⁷¹ vi, 1.

⁷² Consequenter cum dicit: "Sed in omnibus exhibeamus," etc., ostendit in speciali quomodo nos debemus exhibere sicut Dei ministros in usu gratiae collatae. Et hoc quantum ad tria. Primo quantum ad exteriorem operationem; secundo quantum ad majorem devotionem; tertio quantum ad infidelium vitiationem (*Super Ilam Epist. S. Pauli ad Cor., Cap. vi, Lect. 1*).

⁷³ Postquam Apostolus docuerat usum gratiae collatae quantum ad bonas operationes exteriores, hic consequenter instruit eos circa usum praedictum quantum ad interiorem devotionem quae consistit in laetitia cordis, quae latitudinis cordis causat (*Ibid.*).

man receives and which Saint Paul warns the Corinthians not to receive in vain. Saint Thomas opposes this openness of heart, which is caused by devotion, to narrowness of heart. He describes the latter as the condition of a heart that limits itself to small things, as the heart does that has no care except for earthly things and contemns the things of heaven because the mind is not strong enough to understand them.⁷⁴ Openness of heart, on the other hand, signifies greatness and vehemence in desire and he has it who passes over the sensible as small and unworthy and fixes his desire on heavenly things.⁷⁵ Saint Thomas says that the sign of this greatness of heart is to be found in spontaneous speech, for the mouth is immediately connected with the heart. Thus that which is expressed in words is conceived in the heart.⁷⁶ It is possible that he has reference here to the sensible devotion which is caused by that devotion that signifies spiritual gladness. He goes on to say that Saint Paul wishes to tell the Corinthians that if they should fall into this narrowness of heart, they should not remain in such a state but should strive earnestly to obtain the greatness of heart which is not the narrowness of legal observance but the freedom of the spirit, which is in the faith of Christ.⁷⁷

Saint Paul devotes chapters eight and nine of *Second Corinthians* to exhorting the Corinthians to be generous in giving alms to the Church at Jerusalem. Throughout the exhortation the Apostle insists on the necessity of promptness in giving, and Saint Thomas in his commentary on these two chapters takes promptness as the central theme of the discourse. Nowhere in his commentary does the Angelic Doctor say expressly that he is speaking of the promptitude of devotion but there are several indirect arguments that make it very probable that the commentary on these two chapters is to be understood as treating of the promptitude of devotion. Here in *Second Corinthians* almsgiving may be understood by the Angelic Doctor to be an effect of the virtue of charity as it certainly

⁷⁴ Cor autem aliquando est strictum, tunc, scilicet, quando comprimitur et concluditur in modico, sicut cum quis non curat nisi de terrenis, et contemnit caelestia, non valens ea intellectu capere (*Ibid.*).

⁷⁵ Aliquando autem est latum, tunc scilicet, quando quis magna appetit et desiderat, et talis erat Apostolus, qui non reputans ea quae videntur, desiderabat caelestia (*Ibid.*).

⁷⁶ Signum autem laetitudo est os latum, quia os immediate adhaeret cordi. Unde quae per os exprimimus sunt expressa signa conceptionum cordis (*Ibid.*).

⁷⁷ Si aliquando decepti a pseudoangustiati estis, non omnino remaneatis in angustiacione; imo studeatis habere latum cor . . . habeatis cor magnum et liberum libertate spiritus, quae est in fide Christi, et non coangustiamini in servitute observantiae legalis (*Ibid.*).

is considered by him in the *Summa*.⁷⁸ But it is to be noted that in the *Sentences*, mercy, which is the virtue from which almsgiving properly proceeds, is a potential part of justice and not as in the *Summa* an effect of charity.⁷⁹ It is impossible to say whether in the *Commentary on Second Corinthians*, written after the *Sentences* but before the *Summa*, Saint Thomas still referred almsgiving to justice rather than to charity or whether he had already changed his opinion.

In support, however, of the opinion that Saint Thomas is here referring promptitude to devotion, a strong argument can be drawn from the closing verses of the ninth chapter. Father E. B. Allo, O.P., has thus expressed this argument:

The word 'λειτουργία' ('administration,' of Chapter nine, verse twelve) signified 'public service' in the Greek cities. Profane in its first use, it was afterward occasionally used by the Jews as also by the Greeks in a religious sense of 'sacred service.' Paul uses it here to describe the collection which is an act of communion between the churches, the body of Christ, and a service rendered not only to the poor but also to God. He associates the same word elsewhere with the idea of sacrifice.⁸⁰ He employs it as the name of the servants in speaking of the service of God or of Christ. . . .⁸¹ That the word 'λειτουργία' is used in its connection with the virtue of religion in this passage is beyond all doubt. Cornelius à Lapide and others compare the sacrifice of temporal goods made in honor of God to the sacrifice of the Mass—the supreme act of Liturgy.⁸²

Of Chapter nine verse eleven, Father Allo says: "The richness which Paul envisages here is the faculty to devote one's self to others without obstacle. It is the ardor to help others in all sim-

⁷⁸ II-II, q. 32, a. 1, c.

⁷⁹ Sed misericordia conjectat in dationibus aliquod speciale bonum, quod est relevatio miseriae aliorum: unde eleemosyna est actus misericordiae et per consequens liberalitatis. . . . Subvenire miseris non est actus justitiae ratione sui sed ratione suae partis secundum quod liberalitas etiam ad justitiam reducitur sicut pars (*IV Sent.*, d. XV, q. 2, a. 7, qt. 3 and ad 4um).

⁸⁰ *Phil.* ii, 17.

⁸¹ *Heb.* i, 14.

⁸² "Le substantif 'λειτουργία' signifiait 'service public' dans les cités grecques: d'abord profane, il a pris occasionnellement, chez les Juifs (*Cf. Luc.* i, 23; *Heb.* viii, 6; ix, 21) et dans l'hellenisme, le sens religieux de 'service sacré. . . .' Paul se l'approprie pour désigner cette collecte, qui est un acte de solidarité des églises, corps du Christ, et un service fait non seulement pour les pauvres, mais pour Dieu; il associe ailleurs le même mot à l'idée de sacrifice (*Phil.* ii, 17); il emploie le nom d'agent en parlant du service de Dieu ou du Christ (*Heb.* i, 14) . . . mais le sens religieux de 'λειτουργία' dans notre passage est hors de doute. Corn. à Lap., avec autres comparait même ce sacrifice de biens temporels, fait en l'honneur de Dieu, au grand sacrifice de la messe, suprême 'liturgie'" (*Études Bibliques. Saint Paul, Seconde Epître aux Corinth.*, p. 236).

plicity that exalts the thanksgivings rendered to God by Paul and all the Christians.”⁸³

It seems to be quite evident from this that in these two chapters almsgiving, proceeding from charity, is imperated by the virtue of religion and ordained to the worship of God by way of a sacrifice. Hence the conclusion that the promptitude of which Saint Paul and Saint Thomas speak refers to devotion seems to have considerable foundation. Saint Thomas himself points out the readiness of the virtue of religion to imperate mercy in this act of giving alms.

There is nothing to prohibit an act which is elicited by one virtue being imperated and ordained to the end of another. And in this manner almsgiving is spoken of as a work of satisfaction insofar as it is intended to be a satisfaction for sin. Or it may be intended as an act of sacrifice and then it is imperated by the virtue of religion.⁸⁴

From the context, too, in several places in which Saint Thomas speaks of promptitude, it seems justifiable to assume that he is speaking of the promptitude of devotion. This will be seen as the individual places are treated.

The Angelic Doctor first explains what Saint Paul understands by promptitude in giving.

This promptitude can come from two things—an abundance of riches, or a contempt for riches. And thus he who has contempt for riches can do the same thing in his poverty as he who is rich can do in his abundance. For this contempt for riches comes from a heart that is wholly given to God.⁸⁵

This giving of the whole heart to God promptly and spontaneously is the work of devotion. He says again of these two causes of promptness of soul that they are like two faculties or virtues: one

⁸³ . . . la richesse qu'il fait entrevoir en fin de compte, c'est la faculté de se dévouer aux autres sans obstacle, l'ardeur à les secourir en toute simplicité, ce qui exaltera les actions de grâces rendues à Dieu par Paul et par tous les Chrétiens (*Ibid.*).

⁸⁴ Nihil prohibet actum qui est proprie unius virtutis elicitive, attribui alteri virtuti sicut imperanti et ordinanti ad suum finem; et hoc modo dare eleemosynam ponitur inter opera satisfactoria, in quantum miseratio defectuum patientis ordinatur ad satisfaciendum pro culpa; secundum autem quod ordinatur ad placandum Deum habet rationem sacrificii; et sic imperatur a latría (*Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 32, a. 1, ad 2um).

⁸⁵ Ubi sciendum est, quod homo ex duabus causis habet promptum animum ad dandum satis, scilicet, ex abundantia divitiarum, sicut divites, vel ex contemptu divitiarum; et sic idem facit in paupere contemptus, quod facit in divite abundantia; quia cor eorum erat solum ad Deum, et ex hoc provenit contemptus divitiarum (*Super IIam Epist. S. Pauli ad Cor.*, Cap. viii, Lect. 1).

interior—the promptitude of the soul to give; the other exterior—the riches themselves.⁸⁶ It will be remembered how in the *Commentary on the Sentences*, the offering of the poor widow was actually greater than that of others because of her devotion in giving.⁸⁷

Saint Thomas places emphasis on a prompt *will* in giving.⁸⁸ And this is properly the work of devotion—to make the will itself prompt in the service of God. He connects this promptitude with piety in interpreting the words of Saint Paul concerning the profit the Corinthians can derive from almsgiving.⁸⁹

A good work proceeding from piety is more useful to the one that does it than to the one who receives it, for the former has a spiritual good, the latter only a temporal one. And just as the spiritual is to be preferred to the temporal so in the works of piety, giving is to be preferred to receiving.⁹⁰

The intimate relation that Saint Thomas understood between piety and devotion has already been seen in the *Commentary on the Sentences*.⁹¹

The Angelic Doctor goes on to say that the Apostle almost goes so far as to tell the Corinthians that it is more important to will than to do and this is the Apostle's reason for repeated insistence on promptitude of will.⁹² An interesting confirmation of the conclusion that almsgiving is here imperated by the virtue of religion, comes from Father Allo's *Commentary on the twelfth verse of chapter eight*: "The word 'εἰπρόσδεκτος' ('accepted') is specially used of sacrifice in classical language."⁹³ It is to be noted that this word "accepted" is used in connection with promptitude in verse twelve.

⁸⁶ Vel dicendum est et melius, quod est virtus interior animi, et virtus exterior, scilicet facultas rerum temporalium. Virtus interior est promptitudo animi ad dandum . . . quod fuerunt voluntarii ad dandum secundum virtutem animi interiorum, et supra virtutem exteriorem, scilicet, divitiarum (*Ibid.*).

⁸⁷ Vide p. 414, *supra*.

⁸⁸ Quam promptam voluntatem habeatis ad dandum . . . (*Super IIam Epist. S. Pauli ad Cor.*, Cap. viii, Lect. 1).

⁸⁹ viii, 10.

⁹⁰ Bonum enim pietatis plus est utile facienti, quam illi cui fit; quia faciens reportat inde commodum spirituale; recipiens vero temporale, et sicut spirituale praeferrari debet temporali, sic in operibus pietatis utilitas dantis praefertur utilitati accipientis (*Ibid.*, Lect. II).

⁹¹ Vide p. 415, *supra*.

⁹² Quasi dicat: plus est velle quam facere. Et ideo debitis esse prompti ad dandum (*Super IIam Epist. S. Pauli ad Cor.*, Cap. viii, Lect. 1).

⁹³ 'εἰπρόσδεκτος' . . . dit specialment des sacrifices, en langue classique (*Op. cit.*, p. 220).

It is precisely the promptitude of the will that makes the gift acceptable.

Saint Thomas points out that the reason for Paul's boasting about the Corinthians is their promptitude of heart.⁹⁴ He says that the Apostle determines three things to be necessary with regard to the mode of giving—promptitude, abundance, and joy.⁹⁵ Both promptitude and joy are necessary to remove any violence so that the almsgiving may be perfectly voluntary.⁹⁶ And it is worthy of note that the Angelic Doctor refers for confirmation of his doctrine to the *Fifty-third Psalm*, verse eight which reads: "I will freely sacrifice to thee, and will give praise, O God, to thy name. . . ." This is certainly a clear indication that Saint Thomas refers this almsgiving to the virtue of religion.

Two things are necessary for an act of virtue: first, the act itself must be good, and secondly the manner in which the act is performed must be good. For although among men only the external act is seen, God sees both the external act and the internal mode. Hence an act of virtue must be done with sweetness and joy.⁹⁷

Note again that in seeking confirmation of this doctrine, Saint Thomas refers to a passage of Sacred Scripture that is spoken unquestionably of the virtue of religion: "Serve ye the Lord with gladness."⁹⁸ Of importance, too, in this ninth chapter is the frequent linking of promptitude and joy. Spiritual joy, it will be remembered, is a second meaning which Saint Thomas attached to devotion. It may be said that the promptitude of which Saint Thomas speaks here is devotion in the first meaning which he

⁹⁴ Quod autem sit promptus animus vester, probo ex duobus. Primo ex gloriatione nostra de vobis. Nam nisi scirem vos esse promptos ad hoc, non fuisset gloriatus de vobis apud alios (*Super IIam Epist. S. Pauli ad Cor., Cap. ix, Lect. 1*).

⁹⁵ Secundo hortatur eos ad debitum modum dandi. Et primo hortantur, ut dent prompte; secundo, ut dent abundanter; tertio, ut dent hilariter (*Ibid.*).

⁹⁶ Est autem duplex violentum, simplex et mixtum . . . ad removendum ergo illud (simplicem) violentum dicit: . . . non cogat vos ad dandum mandatum nostrum sed moveat vos ad hoc prompta voluntas vestra. . . . Ut ergo hoc mixtum violentum removeat dixit . . . non ex timore confusionis, ne scilicet, erubescatis, sed ex gaudio quod concepistis propter amorem quem habetis ad sanctos (*Ibid.*).

⁹⁷ In actibus autem virtutum duo sunt, scilicet, species actus, et modus agendi qui est ex parte agentis. Unde nisi in actu virtutis utrumque istorum concurrat, non dicitur actus ille simpliciter virtuosus . . . nisi delectabiliter et cum gaudio operetur. Et licet quod homines qui non vident nisi ea quae patent, sufficiat quod quis operetur actum virtutis secundum ipsam speciem actus, puta actum justitiae; tamen apud Deum, qui intuetur cor, non sufficiat quod solum operetur actum virtutis secundum speciem, nisi etiam secundum debitum modum operetur, scilicet, delectabiliter et cum gaudio (*Ibid.*).

⁹⁸ Ps. xc, 1.

attached to it—a quality of the soul and a necessary predisposition to acts of religion. And this promptitude is the cause of spiritual joy. For it is the disposition or devotion in its first meaning, in prayer, that enables prayer to cause the spiritual joy of which Saint Thomas speaks in *First Corinthians*.⁹⁹

Saint Thomas' commentary on the closing verses of chapter nine affords a final argument for referring the promptitude of which he has been speaking to devotion, for in this commentary he refers the whole theme of chapter eight and nine to the virtue of religion. "The reason," he says, "why the Corinthians are to give alms promptly, abundantly, and joyfully is that they themselves may be enriched . . . and that their gifts may be an act of thanksgiving to God."¹⁰⁰ These words would seem to remove all doubt as to the reordination of the act of almsgiving in these two chapters to the virtue of religion.

c) In his commentary on the *Epistle to the Galatians*, Saint Thomas explains the words of Saint Paul regarding those who are Christ's having crucified their flesh.¹⁰¹ "They subdue their flesh," he says, "by vigils, by fasts, and by labors, because of the devotion they have to Christ crucified. By afflicting their flesh they conform themselves to Christ crucified."¹⁰² This is the second occasion upon which Saint Thomas has emphasized devotion to Christ crucified as being the motive for these acts of religion.¹⁰³ And this is not to be wondered at. For they are acts pertaining to sacrifice and must be in conformity with the great act of sacrifice performed by Christ upon the cross. The fact that every act of religion must partake of the qualities of the great act of worship that was Christ's is of immense importance to the appreciation of the place of devotion in the spiritual life and more about it will be seen when the doctrine of the *Summa* is treated.

d) In the prologue of his commentary on the *Epistle to the*

⁹⁹ *Vide* p. 428, *supra*.

¹⁰⁰ Deinde assignat rationem, quare prompte, abundanter, et hilariter dare debeant, ex parte ipsorum dantium; hic assignat rationem ex parte ipsius Dei pro quo dare debent. . . . In ratione autem assignata tria considerantur, quorum primum est ipsorum locupletatio. . . . Sed et hoc ipsum ad alium finem referendum est, scilicet, ad Deum. Et ideo subdit: largitio simplex operatur mediantibus nos gratiarum actionem Deo (*Ibid.*, Lect. 2).

¹⁰¹ v, 24.

¹⁰² Quia vero caro domatur per vigiliis, jejunia et labores; ad haec autem opera moventur ex devotione quam habent ad Christum crucifixum: Christo crucifixo se conformaverunt, affligendo carnem suam (*Super Epist. S. Pauli ad Gal.*, Cap. v, Lect. 7).

¹⁰³ *Vide* p. 424, *supra*.

Ephesians, the Angelic Doctor, in explaining why faith is aptly compared to a pillar of cloud, says that faith has obscurity since it concerns things that are not evident; it is dissoluble because it will one day vanish; it has moisture because it excites to devotion.¹⁰⁴ It has been seen how, in the *Commentary on the Sentences*, Saint Thomas compared the effect of the reception of the Eucharist upon the soul to the effect upon the body of taking food.¹⁰⁵ He indicates in that place that the Eucharist counteracts the action of concupiscence drying up devotion. To be noted again is the close connection between faith and devotion.

e) In his commentary on the *Epistle to the Philippians*, Saint Thomas speaks of devotion to Christ.¹⁰⁶ Then for the first time he speaks of devotion to creatures, saying that the Apostle first commends Timothy to the Philippians for his charity toward them and then for his devotion to the Apostle himself and his veneration of him.¹⁰⁷ Here Saint Thomas points out by inference what it was that made Christ the perfect mediator between God and men—His perfect charity toward men, and His perfect devotion in the worship of His heavenly Father. The Angelic Doctor is very clear on devotion paid to creatures when he treats devotion in the *Summa* and this point will recur there.

f) The commentary of Saint Thomas on the first chapter of the *Epistle to the Colossians* reaffirms the doctrine of the *Sentences* on the necessity of devotion in prayer.

Prayer ought to proceed in such a way that the person who asks devoutly be heard, just as those seeking favors first use persuasion in order to influence; but devotion and meditation on God and the things of God should precede petitions made to God, not in order to change Him but that man may be lifted up to Him.¹⁰⁸

Devotion and meditation are here compared to persuasions pre-

¹⁰⁴ Fides ostendit rectam viam veniendi ad patriam. Unde significatur per columnam nubis. Fides enim ad modum nubis habet obscuritatem, quia cum aenigmate; dissolutionem, quia evacuatur; humiditatem, quia excitat ad devotionem (*Super Epist. S. Pauli ad Ephes.*, Prolog.).

¹⁰⁵ Vide p. 424, *supra*.

¹⁰⁶ ex devotione ad ipsum Christum (*Super Epist. S. Pauli ad Phil.*, Cap. ii, Lect. 1).

¹⁰⁷ Deinde commendat eum, et primo ex charitate ad eos; secundo ex devotione ad Apostolum. Et sic facit bonus mediator, quia illos diligit, hunc veneratur (*Ibid.*, Lect. 4).

¹⁰⁸ Oratio est ascensus mentis in Deum. Postulatio est rerum petitio. Oratio debet praecedere ut devote petens exaudiatur, sicut petentes praemittunt persuasionem ut inclinent; sed nos debemus praemittere devotionem et meditationem Dei et divinorum, non ut eum flectamus, sed ut nos erigamus in eum (*Super Epist. S. Pauli ad Colos.*, Cap. i, Lect. 3).

fixed to a petition. This clearly indicates that Saint Thomas still considers devotion to be a quality of the soul acting as a moral cause in obtaining an answer from God to the prayers of man. The reason for this linking of devotion and meditation becomes clear in the *Summa* where Saint Thomas treats of their relation in a special article.

g) Saint Paul in beginning his *First Epistle to the Thessalonians* commends the manner in which they have received the doctrine he has preached to them.¹⁰⁹ And Saint Thomas observes that it is the devotion and promptness in the Thessalonians' manner of receiving his doctrine that the Apostle wishes to commend.¹¹⁰ He joins expressly for the first time the two words, devotion and promptitude. But it seems impossible to say from this place whether he understands them as synonyms for the same quality or as expressive of two different qualities.

h) In the *Second Epistle to the Thessalonians* Saint Paul gives thanks for the Thessalonians "because their faith groweth exceedingly and their charity aboundeth."¹¹¹ Saint Thomas says that among the gifts of God, faith by which God dwells in man is first. By faith the mind of man is perfected. By faith Christ dwells in his heart. By faith then man is perfected through knowledge, devotion, and inherence in God.¹¹² Devotion therefore is the result of the indwelling of Christ in the heart. Once again devotion is placed in close association with faith—faith in contradistinction to charity. For the Angelic Doctor then mentions charity as the second of the gifts of God.¹¹³

i) In commenting on Saint Paul's doctrine on prayer as contained in the *First Epistle to Timothy*, Saint Thomas again insists on the connection between prayer and devotion. He interprets the words of Saint Paul: "I will, therefore, that men pray . . . lifting up pure hands,"¹¹⁴ as meaning that the Apostle wishes men to pray with devotion of heart.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁹ i, 5.

¹¹⁰ Deinde in speciali commemorat eorum bona, quos primo commendat quod devote et prompte susceperunt praedicationem non obstante tribulatione (*Super Iam Epist. S. Pauli ad Thessal.*, Cap. i, Lect. 1).

¹¹¹ i, 3.

¹¹² In his donis autem Dei, primum est fides, per quam Deus habitat in nobis, et in hac proficimus secundum intellectum. Et sic proficit homo per cognitionem, devotionem, et inhaesionem. 'Habitare Christum per fidem in cordibus nostris' (*Eph. iii*) (*Super Iam Epist. S. Pauli ad Thessal.*, Cap. i, Lect. 1).

¹¹³ Secundum est charitas, per quam Deus est in nobis secundum effectum (*Ibid.*).

¹¹⁴ ii, 8.

¹¹⁵ "Levantes," etc., i. e., orantes cum devotione cordis (*Super Iam Epist. S. Pauli ad Tim.*, Cap. ii, Lect. 2).

The Angelic Doctor speaks of promptitude in the worship of God in commenting on the words of Saint Paul in the same Epistle regarding piety:

'Exercise thyself unto godliness.'¹¹⁶ These words can be understood as pertaining to the worship of God. And note well that the Apostle says: 'Exercise thyself unto godliness'; and does not merely say: 'do that which is unto godliness.' For exercise includes the notion of promptitude and this is because exercise makes for ease, enjoyment, and stability.¹¹⁷

The Angelic Doctor seems to speak here of the promptitude of devotion—the promptitude that causes ease, joy, and stability in the worship of God. This passage lends a great deal of independent support to the interpretation that has been given to chapters eight and nine of *Second Corinthians* and when the two passages are taken in conjunction there seems to be little room left for doubt about the fact that devotion as a prerequisite to acts of religion, consists, at least principally, in promptitude of will. And this devotion is the cause, as Saint Thomas says here, of the devotion that is a spiritual joy.

j) In his commentary on the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, regarding Saint Paul's words that a high priest must be one who can have compassion on them that are ignorant and that err,¹¹⁸ Saint Thomas says that while a priest must be concerned with those things that pertain to the worship of God, he must, nevertheless, be a mediator between God and man. Therefore just as through devotion in prayer he ought to approach to God as one extreme, so through mercy and compassion he ought to approach to man, who is the other extreme.¹¹⁹ This is a reference to the two qualities required in one who is a mediator, spoken of in the *Epistle to the Philippians*. The importance ascribed by the Angelic Doctor to the work of devotion is noteworthy. It puts man in contact with God. Important, too, is the connection between devotion and the virtue of mercy—the idea of service to others. This will be seen in considering the doctrine of the *Summa*.

¹¹⁶ iv, 7.

¹¹⁷ Cum ergo dicit 'exerce teipsum ad pietatem,' potest accipi secundum quod pertinet ad cultum Dei, et ad opera misericordiae exhibenda. . . . Et dicit 'Exerce,' non 'fac,' quia exercitium dicit promptitudinem; et hoc ideo, quia exercitatus facit levius, delectabilius, et stabilius (*Ibid.*, Cap. iv, Lect. 2).

¹¹⁸ v, 2.

¹¹⁹ Dicit ergo: dico quod debet esse in his, quae sunt ad Deum, tamen debet esse medius inter hominem et Deum. Sicut ergo per devotionem orationis debet tangere Deum tamquam unum extremum, sic per misericordiam et compassionem debet tangere alterum extremum, scilicet, hominem (*Super Epist. S. Pauli ad Heb.*, Cap. v, Lect. 1).

k) In the commentary on the *Epistle to the Romans*, the writing of which, it is to be noted, was for all practical purposes coincident with the composition of that part of the *Summa* in which devotion is treated, Saint Thomas speaks of devotion in the first chapter. Saint Paul writes of his readiness to preach the gospel to the Romans, giving as his reason that he is not ashamed of the gospel.¹²⁰ The Angelic Doctor sees the Apostle of the Gentiles speaking here of the promptitude of devotion, and he confirms his conclusion by the words of *Exodus*, "And all the multitude . . . offered first fruits to the Lord with a most ready and devout mind."¹²¹ Saint Thomas further says that the impediment to promptitude is shame, on account of which many leave undone things which otherwise they would do with promptness. And he connects devotion again with Baptism by showing that it is to prevent shame for the gospel that the forehead is anointed in the form of a cross in the administration of the sacrament of Baptism. "For," he says, "the forehead is the seat of shame."¹²² It is to be noted here that the use of the words promptitude and devotion corresponds exactly to their use in other passages in the commentaries on the Epistles. And since, as has been said, this commentary on *Romans* and the *Secunda Secundae* of the *Summa* were written practically at the same time, it may be safely assumed that devotion in its first meaning was used throughout the commentary on the Epistles as synonymous with promptitude. Thus it follows that wherever Saint Thomas has spoken of promptitude in connection with the virtue of religion, as is the case in chapters eight and nine of *Second Corinthians*, he has been speaking of devotion.

l) In the Commentary on the Epistles all the doctrine of the *Sentences* has been reaffirmed and several new points added. Three significations of the word devotion have been clearly distinguished. Devotion in its first meaning still remains a quality or disposition of the soul—a disposition which the doctrine in the commentary on the Epistles seems, with more exactitude than the *Sentences*, to identify, at least in its principal signification, with the notion of promptitude in the worship of God.

¹²⁰ i, 15, 16.

¹²¹ Ex utraque autem causa concludit promptitudinem voluntatis . . . 'Egressaque omnis multitudo . . . obtulit mente promptissima atque devota' (*Exod.*, xxxv) (*Super Epist. S. Pauli ad Roman.*, Cap. i, Lect. 5).

¹²² Et excludit impedimentum promptitudinis, scilicet, erubescantiam, propter quam multi ea praetermittunt, quae alias facerent prompte . . . , et inde est quod baptizati liniuntur chrismate in fronte signo crucis, ubi est sedes verecundiae, ne scilicet evangelium erubescant (*Ibid.*).

2. *In De Malo*. Saint Thomas, in his work *De Malo*, speaks of the sin of indevotion. He is answering an objection to his conclusion that sadness concerning the things of God, precisely because they are the things of God, is a sin. The objection arises from Saint Gregory's statement that this sadness is an internal sorrow of the mind by which a person prays less devoutly. The objection goes on to say that it is not within the power of man to control the devotion of his prayers and hence it is not within his power to prevent this sadness about things divine.¹²³ The Angelic Doctor in his answer says that it is quite true that devotion is from God and therefore is not directly attributable to the actions of man as to a first cause. But man is responsible for its presence or absence insofar as he can dispose himself to devotion or can impede it. And in this sense indevotion is a sin.¹²⁴ This amounts to saying that lack of devotion is not a sin in itself but that it can be a sign or indication of sin insofar as it is a privation resulting from sin. From this it is evident that Saint Thomas is not speaking of devotion as it is a necessary predisposition to acts of religion. The absence of devotion in this sense is always a sin, either mortal or venial depending upon which of two possible meanings the word "disposition" has.¹²⁵ For this devotion, as was seen in the commentaries on the Epistles, is the promptitude of the will in the service of God. Saint Thomas must then be speaking of devotion in the other two senses that have been distinguished—a spiritual joy caused by prayers, and the overflowing of this spiritual joy into sensible feeling. He has already indicated in the *Commentary on the Sentences* that devotion as a spiritual joy is not wholly within the power of man to produce at will.¹²⁶ And this is certainly also true of devotion as it is a joy that is sensibly felt.

This sadness about divine things in the measure that they are divine is not in itself indevotion but is rather caused by indevotion.¹²⁷ That is to say that from the lack of spiritual joy caused by sin, this sadness concerning divine things because they are divine arises. The spiritual joy which Saint Thomas calls devotion is to be

¹²³ Gregorius dicit (*XI Moral.*), quod acedia est interna mentis tristitia, per quam quis minus devote orat aut psallit. Sed non est in potestate hominis quod devote orat. Ergo non est in potestate hominis quod acediam vitet (*Q. D. De Malo*, q. 11, a. 1, Objec. 7).

¹²⁴ Dicendum, quod devotio hominis est a Deo; sed secundum quod homo potest se disponere ad devotionem habendam, vel etiam devotionem impedire, secundum hoc indevotio est peccatum (*Ibid.*, ad 7um).

¹²⁵ Vide p. 429, *supra*.

¹²⁶ Cf. p. 425, *supra*.

¹²⁷ Licet in auctoritate inducta non dicatur quod acedia sit indevotio, sed quod ex ea procedat (*Ibid.*).

carefully distinguished from the joy that results from charity. For the joy of charity is directly opposed to this sadness concerning divine things precisely because they are divine. The joy of charity is never absent from the soul that has charity and charity can be lost only through sin. The spiritual joy that is devotion, however, can be and often is absent from the soul that possesses charity. They differ also in this that while the joy of charity is quiet and constant, devotion as it is a spiritual joy has the connotation of exuberance and gayety and, as has been said, is not constant.

To be especially noted here is the conclusion of Saint Thomas that God is the first cause and the only adequate cause of devotion as it is a spiritual joy. Important, too, is the statement that sadness concerning divine things precisely in the measure that they are divine—one of the most fearful of the capital vices both in its own malice and in the sins which spring from it—arises from indevotion. This is an indication of the important place devotion must hold in any consideration of perfection in the spiritual life.

3. *Super Dionysium "De Divinis Nominibus."* Saint Thomas mentions devotion in an Opusculum written about three years after the completion of the *Commentary on the Sentences*. Dionysius in his work, *De Divinis Nominibus*, treats of God first of all as He is called "Good." "For this name," Dionysius says, "denotes the whole benevolence of divine Providence from its gifts."¹²⁸

To understand the Trinity under this name it is necessary that man approach close to the Trinity by prayer, for the closer he is to the principle of good, the better he will be able to understand it. But when man invokes the Trinity by most pure prayers, by a mind filled with revealed truth and by fitting himself for union with the divine, then he has approached close to the Trinity.¹²⁹

Saint Thomas in his *Explicatio* of this work of Dionysius says that three things are necessary for prayer in order that it bring man close to the Trinity. First it is necessary that man be cleansed of all carnal and worldly affections; secondly, that his intellect be not obscured by the cloudiness of imagination; and finally, that his will

¹²⁸ Et primam, si videtur, perfectam, et totarum Dei processionum manifestativam, boni nominationem inspiciemus, boni principem et superbonam invocantes Trinitatem, quae est manifestativa totarum providentiarum benigne ab ipsa donatarum (Cap. iii, Lect. 1).

¹²⁹ Oportet enim nos orationibus primum ad ipsam sicut boni principem produci, et magis ipsi propinquantes, in hoc doceri optima bona circa ipsam collocata. Cum autem ipsam invocamus castissimis quidem orationibus et revelata mente, et ad divinam unionem aptitudine, tunc et nos ipsi adsumus (*Ibid.*).

be directed to God by charity and devotion.¹⁵⁰ The first two conditions are negative and in the third Saint Thomas names the two positive qualities necessary for union with God. To be noted here is the fact that the Angelic Doctor speaks of devotion where Dionysius speaks of the name of God as He is the author of all that man receives, as He is, therefore, the object of man's indebtedness, and it is thus that God is the object of the virtue of religion. Devotion is here the positive quality which prayer must have, in order that it be effective in uniting man with God. Prayer, it will be remembered, is an ascent of the mind to God,¹⁵¹ and it is the devotion in prayer that makes this ascent of the mind efficacious in uniting man with God.

4. *A summary.* The Angelic Doctor proposes in his Commentary on Saint Paul's Epistles, another problem regarding devotion which he is to solve in his *Summa*. He has made a triple division of devotion and the result does not find favor with him. Devotion must be some one thing and that thing must include all the elements that seem to make a division necessary. In this Commentary, too, Thomas' concept of devotion begins to be more clearly identified with promptitude in worship, a connotation, it will be remembered, which originated with Saint Ambrose. In *De Malo* Saint Thomas takes up the question of the cause of devotion. His predecessors have assigned many causes of devotion. Some named God as cause; others, meditation, prayer, and compunction. Still others mentioned all of these without determining precisely their order and relation one to another. In *De Malo* the Angelic Doctor is not as clear on this point as he is in the *Summa* but he does insinuate the basis for the solution. In the Commentary on Dionysius' *De Divinis Nominibus*, Saint Thomas declares that union with God is brought about by man's ordination to God through charity and devotion. This point he explains more fully in the *Summa*.

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(To be continued)

¹⁵⁰ Sed ad hoc quod oratio nos faciat ei propinquos, tria requiruntur. Primo, quod sensualitas sit munda ab omnibus carnalibus et mundanis affectionibus. . . . Secundo ut intellectus noster non obumbretur caligine phantasmatum. . . . Tertio, ut voluntas nostra per charitatem et devotionem sit ordinata in Deum . . . (*Explicitio super Dionysium, De Divinis Nominibus, Cap. iii, Lect. 1*).

¹⁵¹ Cf. footnote 108.