

## THE THOMISTIC CONCEPT OF DEVOTION

[*Second Installment*]

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### III. SAINT THOMAS' CONCEPT OF DEVOTION AS DEVELOPED IN THE *SUMMA THEOLOGICA*

1. *The definition of Devotion.* In his *Commentary on the Sentences*, Saint Thomas, because he was commenting on the works of another, followed an order of treatment that was not of his own choosing. In the *Summa*, however, the order is entirely his own and thus solely by reason of the place in which he treats devotion he resolves a question, the solution of which offered no little difficulty in his early treatment of devotion in the *Sentences*. The *Secunda Secundae* of the *Summa* is given over to the consideration of the particular means by which man is to attain his ultimate end—treating mainly the means that are at the disposal of every man. These the Angelic Doctor determines to be the three theological and the four cardinal virtues. The second cardinal virtue of which he treats is justice. As the first potential part of justice he assigns the virtue of religion, and his Question on Devotion is the first of a series of questions dealing with the acts of that virtue. Thus he indicates immediately his solution of the question regarding the connection of devotion with the virtue of religion. And by reason of the fact that devotion heads a group of questions on the *acts* of religion, it is evident that the Angelic Doctor has definitely determined its status in the realm of being.

In his prologue to the question on devotion Saint Thomas says: "The acts of religion are now to be considered—first the interior acts, for these are the principal ones—then the exterior acts, which are secondary. The interior acts of the virtue of religion are devotion and prayer, and devotion is to be considered first."<sup>132</sup> He answers four general questions about devotion: What is it; To what virtue does it belong; What are its causes; What are its effects.

His answer to the first question is different not only from his own doctrine in other works, where he considered it to be a dispo-

<sup>132</sup> Deinde considerandum est de actibus religionis. Et primo, de actibus interioribus, qui, secundum praedicta, sunt principaliores; secundo, de actibus exterioribus, qui sunt secundarii. Interiores autem actus religionis videntur esse devotio et oratio. Primo ergo de devotione agendum est (*Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, prol.).

tion of the soul, but also from the doctrine of anyone who preceded him. His answer is original and of immense importance. He shows that it is by acts that man merits and he argues that by reason of the fact that there is a special title of merit in devotion, devotion must be a special act.<sup>133</sup> He shows from what is meant by devotion that it must be a special act.

Devotion comes from the idea of dedication and those were called devout or devoted who in some way dedicated themselves to God so as to be utterly His. Therefore devotion is nothing other than promptitude of will in those things that concern the worship of God. Since it is evident that this is a special act it follows that devotion is a special act of the will.<sup>134</sup>

Hence devotion is neither a quality nor merely a mode of acts of religion. It is itself a special act.

The Angelic Doctor clearly determines the object of this special act. "Devotion is the act of the will by which man offers himself to God to serve Him and this is the ultimate end."<sup>135</sup> It is, as shall be seen, certainly the ultimate end of all other acts of religion. And it is the end of all human actions, as Saint Thomas seems to indicate here,<sup>136</sup> in the measure that religion can command the acts of the other virtues.

The all important question of what exactly this act of promptitude implies and includes will be left to a later section where the principal commentators on the *Summa* will contribute to its better understanding. The remainder of this section will be devoted to a consideration of devotion in its relation to the virtue of religion, to the other acts of religion, and to other virtues and their acts.

2. *Devotion and the Virtue of Religion.* Saint Thomas concludes that devotion is an act of the virtue of religion and he proves it first by showing that devotion comes from the word that means "vow," for a vow is certainly an act of religion.<sup>137</sup> He proves it

<sup>133</sup> Actibus meremur. Sed devotio habet specialem rationem merendi. Ergo devotio est specialis actus (*Ibid.*, a. 1, Sed Contra).

<sup>134</sup> Devotio dicitur a devovendo: unde devoti dicuntur qui seipso quodammodo Deo devovent, ut ei se totaliter subdant . . . unde devotio nihil aliud esse videtur quam voluntas quaedam prompte tradendi se ad ea quae pertinent ad Dei famulatum. . . . Manifestum est autem quod voluntas prompte faciendi quod ad Dei servitium pertinet est quidam specialis actus. Unde devotio est specialis actus voluntatis (*Ibid.*, a. 1, c.).

<sup>135</sup> Et ideo, cum devotio sit actus voluntatis hominis offerentis seipsum Deo ad ei serviendum qui est ultimus finis . . . (*Ibid.*, ad lum).

<sup>136</sup> Consequens est quod devotio imponat modum humanis actibus, sive sint ipsius voluntatis circa ea quae sunt ad finem, sive etiam sint aliarum potentiarum quae a voluntate moventur (*Ibid.*).

<sup>137</sup> Devotio dicitur a devovendo . . . , sed votum est actus religionis. Ergo et devotio (*Ibid.*, a. 2, Sed Contra).

again by saying that it certainly pertains to the virtue of religion to will those things that concern divine worship and, since *to will* those things and *to have a prompt will* in those things pertain to the same virtue, it follows that devotion must be an act of religion.<sup>138</sup> His argument depends upon the fact that both acts have the same formal object and therefore must pertain to the same virtue. To use the example which Saint Thomas himself uses: man does not require two different habits in order to intend just things and to act justly. One and the same habit of justice takes care of both operations.<sup>139</sup>

Saint Thomas gives the reason why he treats of devotion first among the acts of religion. "After devotion, which regards the will itself, prayer, which concerns the mind of man, is the principal act of religion."<sup>140</sup> Devotion, therefore, is the first and most important act of religion. The truth of this statement will become more and more evident when the relation of devotion to other acts of man is considered. He says again: "[Obedience] in the measure that it proceeds from reverence for God is contained in the virtue of religion. And it concerns devotion which is the principal act of religion."<sup>141</sup>

In considering the relation of devotion to the other acts of religion, a threefold division should be made. There are acts which pertain to religion by reason of the natural law and there are those which pertain to that virtue by reason of positive divine law. The former are prayer, adoration, sacrifice, vows, adjuration, and invocation or praise. Positive divine law has determined two different codes of ceremonial law. These correspond to the Old Law before Christ and to the New Law, which He instituted.

Saint Thomas says of the worship of God in the Old Law that it was not distinguished from the worship of Him according to the law of nature as something altogether different, but rather as adding

<sup>138</sup> Ad eandem virtutem pertinet velle facere aliquid, et promptam voluntatem habere ad illud faciendum: quia utriusque actus est idem objectum. . . . Manifestum est autem quod operari ea quae pertinent ad divinum cultum seu famulatum pertinet proprie ad religionem, . . . unde etiam ad eam pertinet habere promptam voluntatem ad hujusmodi exequenda, quod est esse devotum (*Ibid.*, a. 2, c.).

<sup>139</sup> Justitia est qua volunt homines et operantur justa (*Ibid.*, Cf. Aristotle, *V Ethic.*).

<sup>140</sup> Et ideo post devotionem, quae pertinet ad ipsam voluntatem, oratio, quae pertinet ad partem intellectivam, est praecipua inter actus religionis, per quam religio intellectum hominis movet in Deum (*Ibid.*, q. 83, a. 3, ad 1um).

<sup>141</sup> In quantum vero procedit ex reverentia Dei, continetur sub religione: et pertinet ad devotionem, quae est principalis actus religionis (*Ibid.*, q. 104, a. 3, ad 1um).

something over and above what the natural law demanded.<sup>142</sup> He says also of the worship of the Old Law that it was prefigurative of Christ.<sup>143</sup> And again he says that the sacrifice of the Old Law prefigured the immolation of Christ; the sacraments and sacred things of the Old Law prefigured those of the New; and the observances of the Old Law prefigured the life of those under the New Law.<sup>144</sup>

The acts of worship proper to the Old Law are the ceremonial precepts of the Old Testament. The acts of worship proper to the New Law are the Mass, the Sacraments, and the liturgy as it exists in the Church today.

The question that naturally arises when devotion is said to be a special act, namely, the question regarding the reason why devotion is so often spoken of as though it were a mode of other acts of religion, is best treated here before beginning the consideration of the relation of devotion to other acts of religion. Why is man said to pray devoutly, genuflect devoutly, receive Holy Communion devoutly, and so on? It would seem that these are the acts, and devotion only their mode. The Angelic Doctor answers this question by saying that a mover always stamps with its own individuality the motion by which it moves anything.<sup>145</sup> Thus an expert critic can determine the authorship of a painting of one of the Masters simply by examining the characteristics of the work itself. For the painter has put into his work the defects or perfections that are peculiarly his own. He has, so to speak, painted himself into whatever subject he has chosen for his picture. Now the motor in man, that from which every movement of whatever faculty must come, is his will. Hence if the will is wholly given to God by the act of devotion, it necessarily follows that any movement which the will inaugurates must be devout.<sup>146</sup> Devotion is the first, the interior, and the principal act of religion and must, therefore, be in every act of religion, or the act is not a true act of religion at all, but has only the external appearance of one. Perhaps a comparison

<sup>142</sup> Lex vetus distinguitur a lege naturae, non tamquam ab ea omnino aliena sed tamquam ei aliqua superaddens (*Ibid.*, I-II, q. 99, a. 2, ad 1um).

<sup>143</sup> Et ideo oportebat exteriorem cultum veteris legis non solum esse figurativum futurae veritatis manifestandae in patria, sed etiam esse figurativum Christi . . . (*Ibid.*, q. 101, a. 2, c.).

<sup>144</sup> Unde sicut per sacrificia significatur Christus immolatus, ita etiam per sacramenta, et sacra illorum figurabantur sacramenta et sacra novae legis; et per eorum observantias figurabatur conversatio populi novae legis . . . (*Ibid.*, a. 4, ad 1um).

<sup>145</sup> Movens imponit modum motui mobilis (*Ibid.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 1, ad 1um).

<sup>146</sup> Voluntas autem movet alias vires animae ad suos actus: . . . et ideo, cum devotio sit actus voluntatis hominis offerentis seipsum Deo ad ei serviendum, . . . consequens est quod devotio imponat modum humanis actibus (*Ibid.*).

between devotion and the first act of the virtue of charity will clear up this point. They may be compared in the following way:

HABIT	PRIMARY ACT	SECONDARY ACT	OBJECT
Charity	Love	Almsgiving	Union with God.
Religion	Devotion	Sacrifice	Subjection to God

Every secondary act of charity must proceed through the primary act of the virtue so that it is just as impossible to have a true act of almsgiving without the love of charity as it is to have a true act of sacrifice without devotion. And devout sacrifice or devout prayer is spoken of in exactly the same sense as men speak of the charitable giving of an alms. Devotion is not merely a mode of the act of religion any more than love is the mode of the act of almsgiving. Hence, far from relegating devotion to a mere modality, the use of the word to modify other acts of religion indicates its profound importance and absolute necessity.

3. *Devotion and Prayer.* Saint Thomas has determined before that prayer is an act of the reason,<sup>147</sup> and he repeats that doctrine here in the *Summa*.<sup>148</sup> How, therefore, can it come under the influence of devotion which is in the will, or how, for that matter, can it even be an act of the virtue of religion, for religion is subjected in the will. Saint Thomas answers that this is due to the power of the will to move the other faculties of the soul and to ordain them to its own end. Hence, because religion is in the will, it can ordain the intellect to the worship of God.<sup>149</sup> Billuart adds that prayer is not only an act of religion but an elicited act of that virtue. And he argues that to be an elicited act of religion prayer need not be an act of the same potency as that in which the virtue is subjected, that is, the will. It is sufficient that it be ordained to the end of the virtue of religion without the intervention of any other virtue. He gives as an example an exterior act of confession of faith which, although it is elicited by the virtue of faith, is certainly in a different potency. "It is thus," Billuart says, "that the will informed by the virtue of religion moves the intellect to the worship of God by prayer, and thus religion directs this act of reason to its own end without the intervention of any other habit. So prayer is an elicited act of religion."<sup>150</sup> Billuart says here that

<sup>147</sup> Cf. p. 437, *supra*.

<sup>148</sup> Sic ergo patet quod oratio . . . est rationis actus (*Ibid.*, q. 83, a. 1, c.).

<sup>149</sup> Et ideo ex hac parte voluntas movet alias potentias animae ad suos actus (*Ibid.*, I-II, q. 9, a. 1, c.).

<sup>150</sup> Etenim ut actus dicatur ab aliqua virtute elicited, non est necesse quod sit in eadem potentia in qua est virtus, sed sufficit quod per hanc virtutem dirigatur in

many pray without intending thereby to worship God,<sup>151</sup> and it is important to note that this is precisely the work of actual devotion in prayer, to bring to man the realization that in prayer he offers to God his noblest faculty as an act of reverence and worship.

Father Mennessier, O.P., in a note to his French translation of the *Summa*, brings out the essential connection between devotion and prayer:

With regard to the value of prayer as an act of religion, its close psychological connection with the act of devotion should be noted. These two acts are complementary. Devotion turns our will toward God by an efficacious intention which delivers over to Him the whole man. In this consists its essential worth as an act of homage. But because it is an act of homage of a creature it cannot help being accompanied by that appeal to God which is called prayer. How is it possible to conceive of that efficacious intention of subtracting nothing from that which pertains to the honor of God without an appeal to His grace? The totality of that gift demands such an appeal. Prayer is contained in germ in devotion. Prayer and devotion in a complementary manner bear witness to our dependence upon God.<sup>152</sup>

They are the two interior acts of religion by which the will and the intellect are given to God. It is important to note in this regard that, in the system of Saint Thomas, the other acts of religion are ordained not directly to God but directly to these interior acts. For it is his doctrine that men are subjected to God by the subjection of man's noblest faculties. Man's body is subjected to God through his soul. And the external acts of worship are ordained not directly to God Who has no need of them but directly to man who needs them to help the interior acts of devo-

*suum finem, nulla alia mediante virtute. . . Sic est autem in praesenti casu; voluntas enim, ut est informata religione, movet intellectum ad cultum Deo exhibendum per orationem, sicque religio hunc autem rationis dirigit in suum finem, nullo alio habitu mediante; quod est elici a religione* (Billuart, *Cursus Theologiae Sancti Thomae*, t. 7, tract. De Religione, dissert. 2, art. 2).

<sup>151</sup> Multi orant absque eo quod intendunt Dei cultum, aut cogitent de illa subiectione et reverentia illi exhibenda (*Ibid.*).

<sup>152</sup> Notons à propos de cette valeur religieuse de la prière son étroite connexion psychologique avec l'acte de dévotion. Ces deux actes s'appellent mutuellement. La dévotion oriente notre vouloir vers Dieu en une intention efficace qui lui livre tout l'homme. C'est sa valeur essentielle d'hommage. Mais parce qu'il est hommage de la creature, cet acte ne peut manquer de s'accompagner de cet appel à Dieu qu'est la prière. Comment concevoir cette intention efficace de ne nous point dérober aux exigences de l'honneur de Dieu, sans un appel à sa grâce. La totalité de ce don l'exige. La prière est contenue en germe dans la dévotion. L'une et l'autre témoignent de notre dépendance à l'égard de Dieu d'une façon complémentaire (I. Mennessier, O.P., *S. Thomas d'Aquin, Somme Theologique, La Religion*, tome I<sup>er</sup>, page 259-260).

tion and prayer.<sup>153</sup> This is a much more logical, because more orderly, doctrine than that of modern theologians who seek to justify external acts of religion by ordaining them directly to God.<sup>154</sup>

4. *Devotion and Adoration.* Saint Thomas considers first among the external acts of religion, adoration, by which man ordains the acts of his own body to the worship of God. And the importance of devotion to adoration becomes evident when the Angelic Doctor divides adoration, to conform to man's nature, into the spiritual and the corporal. The spiritual he makes identical with devotion, and the external exists only on account of the internal. "In all the acts of latria," he says, "that which is external is ordained to the internal as to the principal. So it is that external adoration is on account of interior adoration, in order that, through the signs of humility corporally manifested, the interior affection to subject one's self to God may be excited. For it is connatural to man to go to the spiritual by means of the sensible."<sup>155</sup> He says again that external adoration must proceed from the spiritual and be ordained to it.<sup>156</sup> Hence devotion is necessary to adoration to the extent that without devotion there would be no external adoration but only empty formulae. Devotion is both the beginning and the end of adoration. Adoration proceeds from devotion and is ordained to it.

Because of the similarity of the act of praise with that of prayer and of adoration, it will be convenient to treat that act here. Saint Thomas describes praise of God as the employment of the divine name as a means of praying to God or of glorifying Him. The act of prayer, because it is internal and second in importance only to devotion, has already been considered. In the praise of God, as in the adoration of God, Saint Thomas insists upon the necessity of interior affection of heart. "Vocal praise of God is necessary," he says, "not on God's account but for the sake of the one who is praising, whose affection toward God is excited by vocal praise of

<sup>153</sup> Deo reverentiam et honorem exhibemus non propter ipsum, qui in seipso est gloria plenus cui nihil a creatura adjici potest, sed propter nos: quia videlicet per hoc quod Deum reveremur et honoramus, mens nostra ei subjicitur, et in hoc eius perfectio consistit (*Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 7, c.).

<sup>154</sup> Cf., e. g., Ad. Tanquerey, *Synopsis Theologiae Dogmaticae*. Vol. I, n. 173, p. 107.

<sup>155</sup> In omnibus actibus latriae, id quod est exterius refertur ad id quod interius sicut ad principalius, ideo ipsa exterior adoratio fit propter interiorem; ut videlicet per signa humilitatis quae corporaliter exhibemus, excitetur noster affectus ad subiiciendum se Deo; quia connaturale est nobis ut per sensibilia ad intelligibilia procedamus (*Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 84, a. 2, c.).

<sup>156</sup> Adoratio corporalis in spiritu fit in quantum ex spirituali devotione procedit, et ad eam ordinatur (*Ibid.*, ad Ium).

Him.”<sup>157</sup> He says that vocal praise is also useful to excite the devotion of others.<sup>158</sup> It will be remembered that in the *Commentary on the Sentences* Saint Thomas spoke of the utility of vocal prayer to excite the devotion of others. Interesting here is the distinction Saint Thomas makes between adoration and praise. “Adoration,” he says, “is owed to God as He is in Himself, incomprehensible, ineffable, and above all praise. Praise is due to God in His effects as they are ordained to man’s utility.”<sup>159</sup> Saint Thomas says again, in speaking of the reason for chant in the liturgy of the Church, that vocal praise is necessary in order that man’s affection toward God be aroused. Hence the institution of chant in the Church was most commendable, for by this means the souls of those less strong are excited to devotion.<sup>160</sup> In this regard he quotes from Saint Augustine a passage that identifies “the affection of piety with ‘devotion.’”<sup>161</sup> It has been seen that Saint Thomas has used piety and devotion very frequently in intimate connection. The Angelic Doctor teaches that chant in the Church has for its end the arousing of devotion. Insofar as it attains this end it is most excellent. If it does not, it is to be condemned.<sup>162</sup>

5. *Devotion and Sacrifice.* In many ways sacrifice is the most important of the external acts of the virtue of religion. A statement of the Angelic Doctor is indicative of this. “Because,” he says, “those things which are external are signs of interior reverence, certain external things pertaining to reverence may be used to acknowledge the excellence of creatures . . . ; but there is something

<sup>157</sup> Necessaria est laus oris, non quidem propter Deum, sed propter ipsum laudantem, cujus affectus excitatur in Deum ex laude ipsius (*Ibid.*, q. 91, a. 1, c.).

<sup>158</sup> Proficit etiam laus oris ad hoc quod aliorum affectus provocetur in Deum (*Ibid.*).

<sup>159</sup> De Deo dupliciter possumus loqui. Uno modo, quantum ad eius essentiam. Et sic, cum sit incomprehensibilis et ineffabilis, major est omni laude. Debetur autem ei secundum hanc comparisonem reverentia, et latriae honor. . . . Alio modo, secundum effectus ipsius, qui in nostram utilitatem ordinantur. Et secundum hoc debetur Deo laus (*Ibid.*, ad Ium).

<sup>160</sup> Et ideo quaecumque ad hoc utilia esse possunt in divinas laudes congruenter assumuntur. Manifestum est autem quod secundum diversas melodias sonorum animi hominum diversimode disponuntur: . . . Et ideo salubriter fuit institutum ut in divinas laudes cantus assumerentur, ut animi infirmorum magis provocarentur ad devotionem (*Ibid.*, a. 2, c.).

<sup>161</sup> Adducor cantandi consuetudinem approbare in Ecclesia, ut per oblectamenta aurium infirmorum animus in affectum pietatis assurgat (Saint Augustine, *Confess.* Lib. X, cap. 33).

<sup>162</sup> Hieronymus . . . reprehendit eos qui in ecclesia cantant more theatro, non propter devotionem excitandam, sed propter ostentationem vel delectationem provocandam (*Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 91, a. 2, ad 2um).



in worship that belongs to God alone and that is sacrifice.”<sup>163</sup> Sacrifice, then, in the strict sense of the word, is proper to the worship of God. It is the necessary act of religion. Saint Thomas declares that it is commanded by the natural law.<sup>164</sup> And because of this it will not be surprising to find an especially close connection between devotion and sacrifice. “Exterior sacrifice,” says the Angelic Doctor, “signifies the interior spiritual sacrifice by which the soul offers herself to God, for the exterior acts of religion are ordained to the interior. . . . And just as interior sacrifice is offered to God alone, so also exterior sacrifice is offered only to Him.”<sup>165</sup> This spiritual sacrifice he identifies with devotion when he says: “Sacrifice is twofold: the first and principal sacrifice is interior and all are held to this, for all are held to offer to God a devout mind. The other sacrifice is exterior.”<sup>166</sup> The interior sacrifice, then, is devotion by which man offers himself to God. All are held to do so. As was seen in the *Commentaries on the Epistles*, habitual neglect of this interior sacrifice is a mortal sin; actual neglect, a venial sin. It would seem from this that the Angelic Doctor intended the distinction between virtual and actual devotion. Saint Thomas distinguishes three classes of goods that can be sacrificed to God: first, those of the soul, sacrificed by devotion and prayer, the principal sacrifice; secondly, the goods of the body which are sacrificed by martyrdom, abstinence, or continence; finally, there are external goods which can be sacrificed to God either directly when they are immediately offered to God, or indirectly by giving them to others.<sup>167</sup> This passage indicates the scope of this act of sacrifice and therefore the universality of devotion, which is the interior and

<sup>163</sup> Et quia ea quae exterius aguntur signa sunt interioris reverentiae, quaedam exteriora ad reverentiam pertinentia exhibentur excellentibus creaturis, inter quae maximum est adoratio: sed aliquid est quod soli Deo exhibetur, sc., sacrificium (*Ibid.*, q. 84, a. 1, c.).

<sup>164</sup> Et ideo oblatio sacrificii pertinet ad ius naturale (*Ibid.*, q. 85, a. 1, c.).

<sup>165</sup> Significat autem sacrificium quod offertur exterius, interius spirituale sacrificium, quo anima seipsam offert Deo . . . : exteriores actus religionis ad interiores ordinantur. . . . Et ideo sicut soli Deo summo debemus sacrificium spirituale offerre exteriora sacrificia (*Ibid.*, a. 2, c.).

<sup>166</sup> Quorum primum et principale est sacrificium interius, ad quod omnes tenentur: omnes enim tenentur Deo devotam mentem offerre.—Aliud autem est sacrificium exterius (*Ibid.*, a. 4, c.).

<sup>167</sup> Triplex est hominis bonum. Primum quidem est bonum animae: quod Deo offertur interiori quodam sacrificio per devotionem et orationem et alios huiusmodi interiores actus. Et hoc est principale sacrificium.—Secundum est bonum corporis: quod Deo quodammodo offertur per martyrrium, et abstinentiam seu continentiam.—Tertium est bonum exteriorum rerum: de quo sacrificium offertur Deo, directe quidem, quando immediate res nostras Deo offerimus; mediate autem, quando eas communicamus proximis propter Deum (*Ibid.*, a. 4, ad 2um).

principal sacrifice. The exact nature of this interior act of sacrifice, what it includes and what it implies, must be left to the next section where the exact significance of what is meant by the promptitude of devotion is to be determined. Saint Thomas here expresses the doctrine that he has expressed before concerning the imperation of other virtues by the virtue of religion. "It sometimes happens," he says, "that those things which pertain to other virtues are ordained to the reverence due to God. Thus someone may give an alms or perform an act of penance and do so to honor God. And in this sense the acts of other virtues can also be called sacrifice."<sup>168</sup>

The Angelic Doctor sums up in a few words the immense importance of the relation of all the sacrifices of the Old Law to the sacrifice of Christ. "Sacrifice," he says, "is ordained to the worship of God so that by sacrifice the subordination of man's mind to God is represented. And it is a part of this subordination that man recognize all that he has as coming from God. . . . But the greatest gift that God has ever given to sinful men is His Son. Hence the greatest sacrifice is that by which Christ offered Himself to God. And it is on this account that all the sacrifices of the Old Law prefigured this great and singular sacrifice of Christ as the imperfect in comparison to the perfect."<sup>169</sup> It can be seen therefore that sacrifice is the central act of the virtue of religion and, consequently, of man's moral life. For religion is the highest moral virtue, holding a middle place between the other moral virtues and the theological virtues, having for its object not God, as have the theological virtues, but the next highest thing, the worship of God.

6. *Devotion and the Sacraments.* a) It has already been seen how Saint Thomas placed the sacraments among the things that pertain to the worship of God. In opening the question to his tract on the Sacraments in the *Summa*, he says: "In the use of the sacraments two things can be considered—the divine worship and

<sup>168</sup> Contingit autem etiam ea quae secundum alias virtutes fiunt in divinam reverentiam ordinari: puta cum aliquis eleemosynam facit de rebus propriis propter Deum, vel cum aliquis proprium corpus alicui afflictioni subicit propter divinam reverentiam. Et secundum hoc etiam actus aliarum virtutum sacrificia dici possunt (*Ibid.*, a. 4, c.).

<sup>169</sup> Per sacrificia repraesentabatur ordinatio mentis in Deum ad quam excitabatur sacrificium offerens. Ad rectam autem ordinationem mentis in Deum pertinet quod omnia quae homo habet, recognoscat a Deo tanquam a primo principio . . . Inter omnia autem dona quae Deus humano generi iam per peccatum lapsu dedit, praecipuum est quod dedit Filium suum. . . . Et ideo potissimum sacrificium est, quo ipse Christus seipsum obtulit Deo in odorem suavitatis, ut dicitur ad *Ephes.*, v, 2; et propter hoc omnia alia sacrificia offerebantur in veteri lege, ut per unum singulare et praecipuum sacrificium figuraretur, tanquam perfectum per imperfecta (*Ibid.*, I-II, q. 102, a. 3, c.).

the sanctification of man.”<sup>170</sup> It has also been seen how in the *Sentences* he considered devotion to have a special connection with Baptism and the Holy Eucharist. In speaking in the *Summa* of the reason for deferring the Baptism of adults, he says: “This delay in conferring the sacrament is necessary from the point of view of reverence for the sacrament, for if men are admitted to Baptism on the greater feasts such as Easter and Pentecost, they receive the Sacrament more devoutly.”<sup>171</sup>

b) With regard to the Holy Eucharist Saint Thomas says that devotion in the reception of this sacrament will remit mortal sin of which the recipient is not conscious.”<sup>172</sup> He distinguishes between the Eucharist as it is a sacrifice and as it is a sacrament, and speaks of the necessity of devotion for both. As a sacrament he says that it has two effects: one direct—to nourish the soul by uniting it with Christ; the other indirect—the remission of sin. “For,” he says, “this union with Christ is brought about by charity, whose fervor remits not only sin but the punishment due to sin. Hence a consequence of this sacrament is remission of the punishment due to sin, but not always a total remission, for this depends upon the devotion and fervor of the recipient.”<sup>173</sup> The fervor Saint Thomas mentions is, of course, the fervor of charity. Devotion is necessary because even in the consideration of the Eucharist as a sacrament, its power to remit sin must come in some

<sup>170</sup> sacramenta novae legis ad duo ordinantur, videlicet—ad remedium contra peccata,—et ad perficiendum animam in his quae pertinent ad cultum Dei secundum ritum christianae vitae (*Summa Theol.*, III, q. 63, a. 1, c.).

<sup>171</sup> hoc est necessarium ad quamdam reverentiam sacramenti, dum in solemnitatibus praecipuis, scilicet Paschae et Pentecostes, homines ad baptismum admittuntur, et ita devotius sacramentum suscipiunt (*Ibid.*, q. 68, a. 3, c.).

<sup>172</sup> in eo qui ipsum percipit in conscientia peccati mortalis, non operatur remissionem peccati. Potest tamen hoc sacramentum operari remissionem peccati . . . alio modo etiam perceptum ab eo qui est in peccato mortali, cuius conscientiam et affectum non habet: forte enim primo non fuit sufficienter contritus, sed devote et reverenter accedens consequentur per hoc sacramentum gratiam charitatis, quae contritionem perficiet, et remissionem peccati (*Ibid.*, q. 79, a. 3, c.).

<sup>173</sup> hoc sacramentum simul est sacrificium et sacramentum; sed rationem sacrificii habet, in quantum offertur; rationem autem sacramenti, in quantum sumitur. . . . Si igitur consideretur ut sacramentum, habet effectum dupliciter: uno modo directe ex vi sacramenti; alio modo quasi ex quadam concomitantia, sicut et circa continentiam sacramenti. Ex vi quidem sacramenti directe habet illum effectum ad quem est institutum. Non est autem institutum ad satisfaciendum, sed ad spiritualiter nutriendum per unionem ad Christum, et ad membra eius, sicut et nutrimentum unitur nutrito. Sed quia haec unitas fit per charitatem, ex cuius fervore aliquis consequitur remissionem non solum culpae, sed etiam poenae, inde est quod ex consequenti per quamdam concomitantiam ad principalem effectum homo consequitur remissionem poenae, non quidem totius sed secundum modum suae devotionis et fervoris (*Ibid.*, q. 79, a. 5, c.).

way from the sacrifice offered to God and the devotion of the recipient supplies the perfect sacrifice. The Angelic Doctor goes on to say that as a sacrifice the Holy Eucharist has the power to satisfy for sin. "But," he says, "in satisfaction the important thing to be considered is the affection of the one offering rather than the size of what is offered."<sup>174</sup> By this, as is evident, he means that devotion, the internal sacrifice, is the important thing, and in proof of this he gives the same example that he gave in the *Commentary on the Sentences*, the widow's mite, which was greater than the offerings of others because of her devotion. "Therefore," he concludes, "although the sacrifice of the Eucharist is sufficient in itself to remit all the punishment due to sin, actually in each case it will remit this punishment only in proportion to the devotion of the one offering it, or the devotion of those for whom it is offered."<sup>175</sup>

He emphasizes the same doctrine in saying that the fact that the Eucharist takes away only a part of the punishment due to sin is the result not of a defect of power in Christ, but of a defect of devotion on the part of man.<sup>176</sup> It is a corollary of this doctrine that the Angelic Doctor expresses in a following question. He makes the answer to the question regarding those who are to receive this sacrament entirely dependent upon their ability or lack of ability to conceive devotion for it. If they are totally without use of reason at all times, it follows that they are incapable of the act of devotion, and hence are not to receive the Eucharist. If, even though their powers of reasoning are weak, they can produce some act of devotion, then they are not to be denied the Holy Eucharist.<sup>177</sup> Even those who at the present may be incapable of an act of devotion, but have had such devotion in the past are not to be forbidden access to the sacrament.<sup>178</sup> Saint Thomas allows here for

<sup>174</sup> In quantum vero est sacrificium, habet vim satisfactivam. Sed in satisfactione magis attenditur affectus offerentis quam quantitas oblationis (*Ibid.*).

<sup>175</sup> Unde et Dominus dicit *Luc xxi*, de vidua quae obtulit duo aera, quod plus omnibus misit. Quamvis ergo haec oblatio ex sui quantitate sufficiat ad satisfaciendum pro omni poena, tamen fit satisfactoria illis pro quibus offertur, vel etiam offerentibus secundum quantitatem suae devotionis, et non pro tota poena (*Ibid.*).

<sup>176</sup> hoc quod tollitur pars poenae, et non tota poena per hoc sacramentum, non contingit ex defectu virtutis Christi, sed ex defectu devotionis humanae (*Ibid.*, ad Sum).

<sup>177</sup> Aliqui dicuntur non habere usum rationis dupliciter: uno modo quia habent debilem usum rationis, sicut dicitur non videns, qui male videt; et quia tales possunt aliquam devotionem huius sacramenti concipere, non est eis hoc sacramentum denegandum. Alio modo dicuntur aliqui non habere totaliter usum rationis. Aut igitur nunquam habuerunt usum rationis, sed sic a nativitate permanserunt; et sic talibus non est hoc sacramentum exhibendum, quia in eis nullo modo praecessit huius sacramenti devotio (*Ibid.*, q. 80, a. 9, c.).

<sup>178</sup> Aut non semper caruerunt usu rationis; et tunc, si prius, quando erant

habitual devotion which is sufficient for the salutary reception of the sacrament. But he implies the doctrine of the *Sentences* and the *Commentaries on the Epistles*, that for the reception of the full effect of the sacrament actual devotion is necessary.

c) In speaking of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, Saint Thomas says that the *res and the sacrament* in this sacrament is not a character but a certain interior devotion which is a spiritual unction.<sup>179</sup> To understand what Saint Thomas meant by this, it will be necessary to bear in mind that in the sacraments he distinguished three things. He distinguished first *the sacrament itself* by which he meant the external matter and form, and whose whole duty it was to signify something else, something interior. Secondly he spoke of the *res and the sacrament*, that which is interior, which is signified by the sacrament itself, yet signifies something else, which is the third thing Saint Thomas distinguished, namely the *res alone*, which is wholly signified and does not signify something else. There are then in every sacrament, *the sacrament alone* signifying and in no way signified, the *res and the sacrament* both signified and signifying, and the *res alone* signified and in no way signifying. In all the sacraments, the *sacrament alone* is the matter and form of each sacrament; the *res alone* is the special grace which each sacrament confers; but the *res and sacrament* is different in the different kinds of sacraments. In the sacraments which imprint a character it is always this character and hence in those sacraments which do not imprint a character, the *res and sacrament* should be something which stands in the place of the character.

Now, devotion, as has been seen, is the act of the will by which man is prompt to worship God and the implication of this act, as has been indicated and as will be clearly seen in the following section, is that the whole man is dedicated to the service of God. Thus, in a certain sense, this act of the will is a sign of dedication or deputation to something that pertains to the worship of God, which is precisely what the character of the sacrament is in those sacraments which imprint a character. To be noted in this regard is the fact that Saint Thomas describes this devotion as a spiritual unction or anointing, that which is signified by the external anointing of the sacrament. In the forty-fourth Psalm are the words: "God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy

compotes suae mentis, apparuit in eis devotio huius sacramenti, debet eis in articulo mortis hoc sacramentum exhiberi (*Ibid.*).

<sup>179</sup> in hoc sacramento res et sacramentum, non est character, sed quaedam interior devotio, quae est spiritualis unctio (*Ibid.*, Suppl., q. 31, a. 3, ad 3um. Cf. *IV Sent.*, d. xxiii, q. 1, a. 2, qt. 3, Solutio, ad 3um).

fellows.”<sup>180</sup> In his commentary on this verse Saint Thomas says: “In the Old Testament priests and kings were anointed. . . . It was likewise for the priest who offered himself to God for a sacrifice.”<sup>181</sup> This priest was Christ. And this offering of one’s self as a sacrifice is precisely what devotion does. To be noted too is the effect of devotion. As shall be seen later the effect of devotion is spiritual joy and thus it may appropriately be spoken of, in connection with Extreme Unction, as the oil of gladness. The Angelic Doctor speaks again of devotion in the reception of Extreme Unction when he says that the personal devotion of the recipient has a great deal to do with obtaining the effect of the sacrament; which fact is confirmed by the deprecatory form used in Extreme Unction.<sup>182</sup> He expresses the same doctrine that he taught in speaking of the Eucharist, that the sacrament is not to be conferred upon those who are incapable of devotion.<sup>183</sup> When he says that a movement of the will is necessary in the reception of this sacrament and that those who do not produce this movement of devotion are not to receive the sacrament,<sup>184</sup> it is evident that he is speaking of the necessity of habitual devotion and not that of actual devotion, for this sacrament is often conferred on those who are unconscious and therefore physically incapable of an act of devotion.

7. *Devotion and the Virtues.* a) The power of the virtue of religion to command the acts of other virtues has been spoken of before. It is based upon the principle which Saint Thomas expresses in the *Prima Secundae*, namely, that a potency extends its operation to include everything in which it can find anything that in any way touches its object.<sup>185</sup> The virtue of religion is so powerful

<sup>180</sup> *Ps.* xlv, 8.

<sup>181</sup> In veteri testamento ungebantur sacerdotes et reges. . . . Item fuit sacerdos qui seipsum obtulit Deo sacrificium (*Eph.* v, 2. S. Thomas, *Commentarium in Ps.*, xlv, 5).

<sup>182</sup> Ad effectum huius sacramenti percipiendum plurimum valet devotio suscipientis, et personale meritum conferentium, et generale totius Ecclesiae: quod patet ex hoc quod per modum deprecationis forma huius sacramenti confertur (*Summa Theol.*, Suppl., q. 32, a. 3, c. Cf. *IV Sent.*, d. 23, q. 2, a. 2, qt. 3, Solutio).

<sup>183</sup> Et ideo illis qui non possunt recognoscere, et cum devotione suscipere hoc sacramentum, dari non debet, et praecipue furiosis et amentibus; qui possent irreverentiam sacramento per aliquam immunditiam facere; nisi haberent lucida intervalla in quibus sacramentum recognoscerent: et sic eis conferri in statu illo posset (*Ibid.* Cf. *IV Sent.*, loc. cit.).

<sup>184</sup> Sed in hoc sacramento requiritur motus liberi arbitrii (*Ibid.* ad 3um. Cf. *IV Sent.*, loc. cit., qt. 4, Solutio).

<sup>185</sup> Ad ea enim se extendit unaquaeque potentia in quibus inveniri potest quocumque modo ratio sui objecti (*Ibid.*, I-II, q. 8, a. 2, c.).

in commanding the acts of the other virtues because it is in the will, and the will moves all the other potencies to their acts.<sup>186</sup>

So important is the work of religion in commanding the acts of the other virtues that it has under this particular aspect a special name. Religion in its office of offering to God not only those things which specially pertain to divine worship such as sacrifice and oblation, but also the acts of other virtues, is called sanctity.<sup>187</sup> Billuart observes that this is not the sanctity which is had by the infusion of sanctifying grace but the sanctity that is a virtue.<sup>188</sup> Saint Thomas himself gives the reason for this special name and takes it from the meaning of the word sanctity. Sanctity etymologically implies both purity and stability and these two qualities pertain especially to the worship of God. For in order that the soul apply itself to the worship of God it is necessary that it withdraw itself from lower things. And since it is to apply itself to God Who is the first principle and the ultimate end, it follows that it must do so with the greatest stability.<sup>189</sup> It is to be noted that sanctity is not really a different virtue than religion. Sanctity is religion as it commands the acts of the other virtues, ordaining them to the worship of God.<sup>190</sup> John of Saint Thomas calls attention to the fact that sanctity has the same substance and the same specific act as religion, that is, to serve God and to ordain the soul to Him, not indeed by exhibiting something as a protestation of servitude but by ordaining other virtuous works so that they become like the works of a servant for his master.<sup>191</sup> Therefore as having the same

<sup>186</sup> Et hoc modo voluntas movet intellectum, et omnes animae vires (*Ibid.*, I, q. 82, a. 4).

<sup>187</sup> Nam religio dicitur, secundum quod exhibet Deo debitum famulatum in his quae pertinent specialiter ad cultum divinum, sicut in sacrificiis, oblationibus et aliis hujusmodi; sanctitas autem dicitur, secundum quod homo non solum haec, sed aliarum virtutum opera refert in Deum, vel secundum quod homo se disponit per bona quaedam opera ad cultum divinum (*Ibid.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 8, c.).

<sup>188</sup> Non est quaestio de sanctitate quae habetur per infusionem gratiae justificantis, sed de sanctitate prout est virtus (*Billuart, op. cit.*, t. 7, dissert. I, a. 4).

<sup>189</sup> Nomen sanctitatis duo videtur importare: uno quidem modo munditiam; . . . alio modo importat firmitatem . . . Munditia enim necessaria est ad hoc quod mens Deo applicetur, quia mens humana inquinatur ex hoc quod inferioribus rebus conjungitur. . . . Oportet autem quod mens ab inferioribus rebus abstrahatur, ad hoc quod supremae rei possit conjungi. Et ideo mens sine munditio Deo applicari non potest. . . . Firmitas etiam exigitur ad hoc quod mens Deo applicetur; applicatur enim ei sicut ultimo fini et primo principio; hujusmodi autem oportet maxime immobilia esse (*Ibid.*, q. 82, a. 8, c.).

<sup>190</sup> Sic ergo sanctitas dicitur per quam mens hominis seipsam et suos actus applicat Deo; unde non differt a religione secundum essentiam, sed solum ratione (*Ibid.*).

<sup>191</sup> Sanctitas habet eandem substantiam, et speciem actus (ac religio) sc. servire Deo et ordinare mentem ad ipsum non quidem exhibendo aliquid in protestationem

substance and the same act, as being, in short, the same virtue, its first and principal act, affecting every other act and necessarily imposing its mode on every other act, is the act of devotion.

b) That devotion has an intimate connection with the virtue of obedience is readily apparent from the fact that obedience, like religion, is a potential part of justice. Saint Thomas speaks of this intimate connection between devotion and obedience when he says:

Obedience proceeds from reverence . . . and from this point of view obedience is to be found in different virtues . . . insofar as it proceeds from reverence of God, obedience is contained under the virtue of religion: and it pertains to devotion which is the principal act of the virtue of religion. This is the sense in which it is more praiseworthy to obey God than to offer sacrifice. And also it is more praiseworthy because "in sacrifice external goods are offered to God, while by obedience one's own will is offered," as Gregory says.<sup>192</sup>

Hence the only way in which obedience, which is a less exalted virtue than religion, can supercede an act of the virtue of religion is by coming under the imperation of religion, that is, of sanctity, and being ordained to the latter's end. Cajetan says on this point:

Obedience is preferred to sacrifice only insofar as obedience is taken causatively, as contained under religion and pertaining to the principal act of religion, which is devotion. And so it is not to be wondered at that obedience in this sense is to be preferred to a lesser act of religion. It is as though one were to say: Devotion is better than sacrifice; interior sacrifice of the will is better than exterior sacrifice, which is evident. And this is the meaning of the words of Gregory when he says that the will is sacrificed. Without doubt they refer to sacrifice made to God.<sup>193</sup>

servitutis, sed ordinando alia opera virtuosa, ut illa fiant quasi opera servi ad Dominum (John of Saint Thomas, *Cursus Theol.*, t. 7, disp. 19, a. 8, n. 14).

<sup>192</sup> obedientia procedit ex reverentia, quae exhibet cultum et honorem superiori: et quantum ad hoc sub diversis virtutibus continetur; . . . in quantum vero procedit ex reverentia Dei, sub religione, et pertinet ad devotionem, quae est principalis actus religionis. Unde secundum hoc laudabilius est obedire Deo quam sacrificium offerre: et etiam quia in sacrificio immolatur aliena caro, per obedientiam autem propria voluntas, ut Gregorius dicit (*Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 104, a. 3, ad 1um).

<sup>193</sup> Obedientia dupliciter sumitur: causaliter, et formaliter. Si formaliter, sic una est species: si causaliter, in multis reponitur speciebus. Et laus ejus qua anteponitur religionis actui qui est victimas offerre, convenit ei causaliter sumptae, prout continetur sub religione, et spectat ad potioem religionis actum, qui est devotio. Et ideo non est mirum si hoc modo praepositur minori actui religionis: tanquam si diceretur: Melior est devotio quam victima: melius est sacrificium interioris voluntatis quam exterioris victimae; quod est per se notum. Et hanc rationem reddunt verba Gregorii, dicendo quod mactatur voluntas: procul dubio in sacrificio divinum (Cajetan, *Commentarium in II-II Summae Theol.*, q. 104, a. 4).



This doctrine of Saint Thomas and of Cajetan is clear. The words of Gregory, very often loosely applied to signify that obedience in itself is to be preferred to sacrifice, are not to be so applied. For true sacrifice, and it must be assumed that Saint Gregory spoke of true sacrifice, presupposes the interior sacrifice, the act of devotion than which there is no greater act except on the plane of the theological virtues. Hence it is only when commanded by religion and therefore when it, itself, presupposes the act of devotion that obedience becomes greater than sacrifice.

c) The Angelic Doctor outlines the place of devotion in the virtue of justice when he places all that may be made matter for sacrifice in three general categories. First there are the goods of the soul, offered to God by devotion and prayer, secondly the goods of the body, thirdly external goods, which last may be offered to God immediately, or mediately when they are given to one's neighbor.<sup>194</sup> Giving to one's neighbor that which is his due is the proper object of the virtue of justice and hence can become matter for sacrifice only by reason of the imperation of the virtue of religion. When such is the case, devotion holds the same important place as it was seen to hold in the question on sacrifice properly speaking.

d) Saint Thomas connects fortitude and devotion in speaking of the virtue of magnificence, a part of fortitude. He says that magnificence is the virtue that strengthens man to undertake works that by their very nature demand a certain splendor or grandeur.<sup>195</sup>

But the works of man are always ordained to some end. And since there is no end of human works as great as that of honoring God, it follows that magnificence especially operates in great works which are ordained to the honor of God. Thus magnificence is connected with the virtue of sanctity because its principal effect is ordained to religion or sanctity.<sup>196</sup>

<sup>194</sup> Triplex est hominis bonum:—primum quidem est bonum animæ quod Deo offertur interiori quodam sacrificio per devotionem, et orationem, et alios hujusmodi interiores actus; et hoc est principale sacrificium. Secundum est bonum corporis, quod Deo quodammodo offertur per martyrium et abstinentiam, seu continentiam.—Tertium est bonum exteriorum rerum, de quo sacrificium offertur Deo; directe quidem, quando immediate res nostras Deo offerimus; mediate autem quando eas communicamus proximis propter Deum (*Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 85, a. 3, ad 2um).

<sup>195</sup> Ad magnificentiam pertinet facere aliquid magnum, sicut ex ipso nomine apparet (*Ibid.*, q. 134, a. 2, c.).

<sup>196</sup> Magnificentia intendit opus magnum facere. Opera autem ab hominibus facta ad aliquem finem ordinantur. Nullus autem finis humanorum operum est adeo magnus, sicut honor Dei; et ideo magnificentia præcipue magnum opus facit in ordine ad honorem Dei. . . . Et ideo magnificentia conjungitur sanctitati, quia præcipuus ejus effectus ad religionem sive ad sanctitatem ordinatur (*Ibid.*, ad 3um).

e) The Angelic Doctor says that while temperance itself effects purity of soul, it does not have the nature of holiness unless it is referred to God.<sup>197</sup> In speaking of vows, Saint Thomas shows how the matter of temperance is readily ordainable to the end of religion. "That which is matter for a vow," he says, "is sometimes the act of another virtue, as fasting and chastity."<sup>198</sup>

f) Saint Thomas has determined that religion is able to command the acts of all the virtues.<sup>199</sup> With regard to the other moral virtues there is no difficulty. Religion as the highest and noblest of the moral virtues can ordain the others to a higher end. But the theological virtues which have for their object God Himself, offer a special difficulty. Religion is inferior to the theological virtues and hence the conception of religion commanding their acts seems to be opposed to the very nature of imperation, by which one commands another to do something,<sup>200</sup> that is, ordains the manner in which something is to be done for it by others.<sup>201</sup> This requires a subjection of the one commanded to the one commanding. The former must be inferior to the latter in some way at least. But it seems impossible to say that the theological virtues are in any way inferior to religion. On the contrary religion seems to be in every way inferior to them.

John of St. Thomas answers this difficulty directly:

The true answer to this problem is that the word "formal" resolves it completely: for it is to be conceded that an inferior habit is never able formally to command its superior. But it is easily able to do so materially, that is, it can command the thing that is otherwise its superior but which under some particular aspect in which it is commanded is its inferior.<sup>202</sup>

This answer seems to dispose of all the external acts of the theological virtues. For by reason of the fact that they are external they are

<sup>197</sup> Temperantia munditiam quidem operatur, non tamen ita quod habeat rationem sanctitatis, nisi referatur in Deum (*Ibid.*, q. 82, a. 7, ad 2um).

<sup>198</sup> Illud quod cadit sub voto, quandoque quidem est actus alterius virtutis, sicut jejunare et continentiam servare (*Ibid.*, q. 88, a. 5, ad 1um).

<sup>199</sup> omne opus virtutis ad religionem seu patriam pertinet per modum imperii, secundum quod ad divinam reverentiam ordinatur, quod est proprius finis patriae (*Ibid.*, q. 88, a. 5, c.).

<sup>200</sup> Imperans enim ordinat eum qui imperat, ad aliquid agendum (*Ibid.*, I-II, q. 17, a. 1, c.).

<sup>201</sup> Sicut enim homo imperando, vel deprecando, ordinat quodammodo quid sibi ab aliis fiat (*Ibid.*, II-II, q. 88, a. 1, c.).

<sup>202</sup> Vera resolutio hujus difficultatis est, quod sermo formalis omnia solvit. Concedendum quippe est nunquam posse aliquam habitudinem, seu habitum inferiorem imperare superiori formaliter; bene tamen superiori materialiter, i. e., rei, quae alias superior est, secundum tamen rationem qua imperatur, est illi inferior (John of Saint Thomas, *Cursus Theologicus*, t. vii, disp. 19, art. 8, n. 19).

under this one aspect inferior to the internal act of religion ordaining them to its end. Thus an external act of charity such as fraternal correction, or an external profession of faith are easily ordainable by the virtue of religion. But what of the interior acts of the theological virtues? John of Saint Thomas says again:

It can happen that some virtue is from its own part completely incapable or ordination to another or a higher end but it is so ordainable by reason of some circumstance which the inferior virtue adds to it; and then it is not formally or absolutely imperated by the inferior virtue. It is only that the material act of the superior virtue according to the circumstance added to it is imperated or ordained by the inferior virtue from which it participates that circumstance, because from this particular point of view the virtue that is otherwise wholly superior is inferior. Thus acts of faith or acts of the other theological virtues in themselves are entirely above the imperation of religion because they attain in the highest way the ultimate end, so that there is no higher end for them. Yet some circumstances can be added to such an act, for example, that it be made the matter of a vow, since I can add an obligation to such liberty, and as such, that is, as free, the act is considered materially, as it were, and thus it is directed by the virtue of religion, and its omission becomes a sin against the virtue of religion.<sup>203</sup>

Billuart has the same doctrine and calls such imperation of acts of the theological virtues accidental imperation. He speaks of an act of charity being so imperated<sup>204</sup> and thus it is clear that even the

<sup>203</sup> Aliquando vero contingit aliquam virtutem non posse ordinari ad ulteriorem, et altiozem finem secundum omnem suam formalitatem, et secundum ultimum, quod habet, bene tamen secundum aliquam circumstantiam, vel formalitatem, quae sibi addi potest a virtute inferiori; et tunc non imperatur simpliciter, et formaliter a virtute inferiori, potest tamen ille materialis actus virtutis superioris, secundum illam circumstantiam vel formalitatem, quae sibi additur, imperari, et ordinari ab ea virtute, a qua talem circumstantiam, vel formalitatem participat, quia sub hac consideratione est illi inferior, v. g., actus fidei vel aliarum virtutum theologiarum, secundum se formalissime consideratus non potest imperari a religione quia secundum suam ultimam formalitatem attingit supremo modo finem ultimum, nec habet ulteriorem finem, ad quem ordinetur. Caeterum potest addi illi aliqua circumstantia, sc., quod fiat ex voto, quia possum ego tali libertati addere obligationem, et pro hac parte, pro qua ille actus liber est, quasi materialiter consideratur, et habere potest circumstantiam aliquam in qua dirigatur a religione; ita quod si omittat illum actum exercere, peccet contra religionem (*Ibid.*, n. 21).

<sup>204</sup> Virtutem quae secundum se est aliis inferior, posse per accidens et secundum quid fieri eius superiorem ratione alicuius circumstantiae quam eis superaddit . . . actus charitatis est secundum se superior omnibus virtutibus moralibus nec ad nobiliorem finem potest imperari seu ordinari, cum supremo modo attingat ultimum finem; per accidens tamen, puta, si fiat ex voto, subditur secundum hanc circumstantiam religioni et per eam ad suum finem dirigatur (Billuart, t. 7, dissert. 1, tract. de Relig., art. 2).

highest act of which man is capable in this life can become by imperation an act of the virtue of religion.

It has been said before that religion is the connecting link between the moral and the theological virtues. Cajetan says on this point:

Just as in nature things are so connected and ordered that the inferior in its highest operation attains to the condition of the superior (as, for example, the mind of man in its supreme act understands without discursive reasoning), so the supreme moral virtues, that is, religion, participates the nature of the theological virtues. On this account religion which is moral does not attain God as its object or the matter in which it operates . . . but because it participates in the nature of the theological virtues, it attains to God not in Himself, but as the One to Whom worship is due.<sup>205</sup>

Saint Thomas explains the precise difference between the union with God effected by charity and that effected by devotion: "It pertains to charity," he says, "that man give himself to God by adhering to Him through a union of the spirit; but that man give himself to God by the works of worship of God immediately pertains to religion."<sup>206</sup> Cajetan observes that by the union of the spirit is meant union of the will.<sup>207</sup> The Angelic Doctor continues:

Just as the natural oil of the body on the one hand is generated by bodily heat and on the other conserves bodily heat, so devotion is caused by charity and also nourishes charity. For love of another makes one more prompt to serve him and on the other hand love is conserved and increased by the performance of loving actions and by meditations.<sup>208</sup>

<sup>205</sup> Sicut in universo naturae rerum sic sunt connexae et ordinatae ut inferior in sui supremo attingat naturae superioris conditionem (in cuius signum, natura elementaris in suo supremo movetur motu caelesti, et anima in sui supremo intelligit absque discursu); ita in virtutibus moralibus suprema earum, quae est religio, participat naturam theologalium virtutum. Propter quod religio, quia moralis est, actibus suis non attingit Deum ut objectum seu materiam circa quam operatur, sed circa humanam mentem, humana opera, resque exteriores, quas offert Deo orando, adorando, sacrificando, offerendo: quia vero theologales participat, Deum habet pro objecto non simpliciter, sed cui debitum cultum affert (*Op. cit.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 5).

<sup>206</sup> Ad charitatem pertinet immediate quod homo tradat seipsum Deo, adhaerendo ei per quamdam spiritus unionem; sed quod homo tradat seipsum Deo ad aliqua opera divini cultus, hoc immediate pertinet ad religionem (*Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 2, ad 1um).

<sup>207</sup> Charitas per seipsam unit mentem Deo per unionem spiritus, hoc est voluntas (Cajetan, *loc. cit.*, *ibid.*).

<sup>208</sup> Pinguedo corporalis et generatur per calorem naturalem digerentem; et ipse naturalis calor habet pinguedinem quasi ejus nutrimentem: et similiter charitas et devotionem causat, in quantum ex amore aliquis redditur promptus ad serviendum amico, et etiam per devotionem charitas nutritur; sicut et quaelibet amicitia conservatur et augetur per amicabilem operum exercitium et meditationem (*Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 2).

8. *The Causes of Devotion.* Saint Thomas in *Q. D. de Malo* said that God is the cause of devotion. Here in the *Summa* he distinguishes two kinds of causes—extrinsic and intrinsic. “The extrinsic and principal cause of devotion is,” he says, “God.”<sup>209</sup> And he quotes the Commentary of Saint Ambrose on the Gospel according to Saint Luke:<sup>210</sup> “Thus it is that Ambrose says, those whom God makes worthy He calls, and whom He calls He makes holy: and if He wished He might have changed the indevotion of the Samaritans to devotion.”<sup>211</sup> “The intrinsic cause of devotion,” says the Angelic Doctor, “which comes from man himself, is meditation or contemplation.”<sup>212</sup> The argument which he gives for this conclusion is completely convincing. Since devotion is a movement of the will by which man is prompt to worship God, it necessarily presupposes an act of the intellect, for the good conceived by the intellect is the object of the will. Hence meditation is the cause of devotion by reason of the fact that it produces in man the conviction that he must give himself to divine worship.<sup>213</sup> Saint Thomas shows that there is a twofold consideration in meditation which will cause devotion. There is first the consideration of the goodness and beneficence of God. This causes love and love is the proximate cause of devotion.<sup>214</sup> It has already been seen how charity causes devotion and how the union it effects with God is different from that of devotion. The second consideration which causes devotion is that of man’s defects by reason of which he must constantly rely upon the help of God. This consideration is rather a negative than a positive cause of devotion for it excludes presumption, thus removing the impediment to devotion. It is evident that if a man by presumption refuses to subject himself to God, he cannot offer himself to God until that vice is removed.<sup>215</sup> The Angelic Doctor

<sup>209</sup> Causa devotionis extrinseca et principalis Deus est (*Ibid.*, a. 3, c.).

<sup>210</sup> *Luke*, ix, 52-53.

<sup>211</sup> Et conversus increpavit Deus quod dignatur vocat: et quem vult religiosum facit; et si voluisset, Samaritanos ex indevotis devotos fecisset (Saint Ambrose, *Supra Lucam*, ix).

<sup>212</sup> Causa autem intrinseca ex parte nostra oportet quod sit meditatio, seu contemplatio (*Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 3, c.).

<sup>213</sup> Devotio est quidam voluntatis actus ad hoc quod homo prompte se tradat ad divinum obsequium. Omnis autem actus voluntatis ex aliqua consideratione procedit, eo quod bonum intellectum est objectum voluntatis, . . . et ideo necesse est quod meditatio sit devotionis causa, in quantum scilicet homo per meditationem concipit quod se tradat divino obsequio (*Ibid.*).

<sup>214</sup> Ad quod quidem inducit duplex consideratio:—una quidem quae est ex parte divinae bonitatis et beneficiorum ipsius . . . et haec consideratio excitat dilectionem, quae est proxima causa devotionis (*Ibid.*).

<sup>215</sup> Alia vero est ex parte hominis considerantis suos defectus, ex quibus indiget ut Deo innitatur . . . et haec consideratio excludit praesumptionem, per quam aliquis impeditur ne Deo se subiciat, dum suae virtuti innititur (*Ibid.*).

observes that meditation upon God is in itself more powerful to cause love and consequently devotion, for God is lovable above all things. But because the mind of man is weak, it needs to be drawn both to knowledge and love of the divine through knowledge and love of the sensible. Hence those things which pertain to the humanity of Christ are usually more powerful to excite devotion; nevertheless devotion principally concerns the Divinity.<sup>216</sup>

9. *The effects of Devotion.* Saint Thomas determines that there is a twofold effect of devotion to correspond to the twofold consideration or meditation that causes devotion.<sup>217</sup> It is interesting to note that the Angelic Doctor turns for an argument to show that the principal effect of devotion is joy, to the use of the word devotion in the liturgy of the Church: "One of the Collects of the Mass," he says, "has the following petition, 'Grant, we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, that we whom these hallowed fasts chasten, may gladden our very devotion.'"<sup>218</sup> He goes on to say that the principal effect of devotion is joy, for the principal consideration from which devotion arises is that of God's goodness and this consideration primarily causes joy. However, because we do not in this life fully possess God, this consideration can cause secondarily, sadness. The second consideration is that of man's defects and its effects with regard to devotion are just the reverse of the first consideration. For meditation on one's defect primarily causes sadness, secondarily, joy on account of hope in the divine aid. This sadness, however, is not harmful but good, for it is according to God.<sup>219</sup>

<sup>216</sup> quod ea quae sunt Divinitatis, sunt secundum se maxime excitantia dilectionem, et per consequens devotionem, quia Deus est super omnia diligendus; sed ea debilitate mentis humanae est quod sicut indiget manductione ad cognitionem divinatorum, ita ad dilectionem per aliqua sensibilia nobis nota; inter quae praecipuum est humanitas Christi (*Ibid.*, a. 3, ad 2um).

<sup>217</sup> Devotio per se quidem et principaliter spiritualem laetitiam mentis causat; ex consequenti autem, et per accidens causat tristitiam (*Ibid.*, a. 4, c.).

<sup>218</sup> Quos jejunia votiva castigant, ipsa quoque devotio sancta laetificet (Collect. Feria V post Dominic. IV Quadrag.).

<sup>219</sup> Devotio ex duplici consideratione procedit: principaliter quidem ex consideratione divinae bonitatis, quia ista consideratio pertinet quasi ad terminum motus voluntatis tradentis se Deo, et ex ista consideratione per se quidem sequitur delectatio . . . , sed per accidens haec consideratio tristitiam quamdam causat in his qui nondum plene Deo fruuntur. . . . Secundario vero causatur devotio ex consideratione propriorum defectuum; nam haec consideratio pertinet ad terminum, a quo homo per motum voluntatis devotae recedit, ut scilicet non in se existat, sed Deo se subdat. Haec autem consideratio e converso se habet ad primam; nam per se quidem nata est tristitiam causare, recogitando proprios defectus, per accidens autem laetitiam, scilicet propter spem divinae subventionis. Et sic patet quod ad devotionem primo et per se consequitur delectatio; secundario autem et per accidens tristitia, quae est secundum Deum (*Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 4, c.).

“Even,” says Saint Thomas, “in the consideration of the passion of Christ, there is something that causes sadness—the sins of man, on account of which Christ suffered—and something that causes joy—the goodness of God toward man in providing for his redemption.”<sup>220</sup> Cajetan makes an important observation with regard to this effect of devotion when he says:

Note that they are not devout persons who are ordinarily sad and sorrowful and are not able to have dealings with others without being disturbed and distracted. The devout person is the happy person, joy floods his soul not only from a consideration of God’s goodness but also from the consideration of his own defects, for his sorrow is according to God and is accompanied by joy.<sup>221</sup>

The word that Cajetan uses to describe the condition of those who are truly devout, “*hilares*,” is indicative of a special kind of joy. It is a gaiety, a hilarity that is different as has been seen from the joy caused by charity.

10. *Conclusion.* Devotion presented to Saint Thomas the kind of problem in whose solution the Angelic Doctor was without peer. It was the problem of sifting, of refining, of synthesizing the great mass of doctrine which he had inherited from his predecessors.

The word devotion had occurred in Sacred Scripture in a context which suggested worship of God.<sup>222</sup> Pagan authors, too, had certainly used it in this connection.<sup>223</sup>

Among the Doctors of the Church Saints Hilary,<sup>224</sup> Ambrose<sup>225</sup>

<sup>220</sup> In consideratione passionis Christi est aliud quod contristet, scilicet defectus humanus, propter quem tollendum, Christum pati oportuit, et est aliquid quod laetificet, scilicet Dei erga nos benignitas; quae nobis tali liberatione providit (*Ibid.*, ad lum).

<sup>221</sup> Hinc habes quod non sunt devotae personae quae, communiter tristes ac sylvestres, nesciunt conversari cum aliis, nisi perturbentur aut dissolvantur. Nam devotae personae sunt hilares, laetae in animo suo non solum ex principali causa, ut in litera dicitur, sed ex secundaria, scilicet consideratione propriorum defectuum. Nam tristitia earum est secundum Deum, et eam comitatur gaudium. Propter quod de sanctis legimus quod laeti hilaresque erant, et merito, utpote inchoantes in terris caelestem conversationem (Cajetan, *op. cit.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 4).

<sup>222</sup> *Exod.* xxxv, 21, 22, 29; *II Paralip.* xxix, 31; *Num.* vi, 21; *Acts* xxxiii, 12, 14, 21.

<sup>223</sup> Cicero, *III De Natura Deorum*, 6; *ibid.*, II, 3 ad fin.; *Epist. ad Quirit.*, 1; *Epist. ad Dom.*, 57; *Lib. III Officiorum*, 25; Caesar, *III B. G.*, 22; *ibid.*, VI B. G., 16; Nepos, *Alcibiades*, 6; Ovid, *Lib. XII Heroidum*, 45; Virgil, *Lib. I Aeneid.*, 716; Horatius, *Lib. III Odum*, 4; *Lib XVI Epodum*, 9; *ibid.*, *Lib. III*, 23, 10; *ibid.*, *Lib. IV*, 14, 18; Livy, *Lib. VIII Annalium*, 9; *ibid.*, XVIII, 18 ad fin.; Seneca, *Lib. III Beneficiorum*, 5; Petronius, *Satyrae*, 103; Juvenal *IX Satyrae*, 71; Tacitus *Lib. IV Annalium*, 52; *ibid.*, *Lib. III*, 13; *ibid.*, *Lib. XII*, 65.

<sup>224</sup> *Commentarius in Matt.* Cap. XXIII, n. 2 (PL IX, 1045); *Ibid.*, Cap. XXXI, n. 1 (PL IX, 1066); *Tractatus in Ps. CXLI*, n. 2 (PL IX, 834).

<sup>225</sup> *Epistolae Primae Classis*, *Epist. XVII*, n. 2 (PL XVI, 1002); *Comment. in*

and Augustine<sup>226</sup> had been unanimous in linking devotion with worship of God and with prayer. They had insisted on its fundamental meaning, that of "complete oblation." Saint Ambrose had called it a virtue and the most important virtue. Saint Gregory the Great and Saint Bernard of Clairvaux had echoed the doctrine of these earlier Fathers.<sup>227</sup>

The Pre-Scholastics had followed in general the tradition of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church. Hugh of Saint Victor had said of devotion that it is the result of meditation, of knowledge, and of compunction; that it is a pious and humble affection for God, which includes the virtues of faith, hope, and charity; that in some sense it is synonymous with prayer.<sup>228</sup> Richard of Saint Victor seems to identify devotion with charity.<sup>229</sup> Peter Lombard had followed completely the doctrine of Hugh of Saint Victor.<sup>230</sup>

Of the Scholastics who preceded or were contemporary with the Angelic Doctor, Alexander of Hales had insisted on the necessity of devotion to sacrifice and prayer.<sup>231</sup> Saint Bonaventure had collected most of the doctrine on devotion of those who preceded him and, in an effort to unify it, had proposed the curious doctrine that the interior acts of worship of God pertain to the theological virtues while the external ones are elicited by the virtue of justice.<sup>232</sup> Saint Albert the Great, in apparent despair of ever reaching complete clarity in simplicity, had distinguished between the devotion of compunction and the devotion of charity, and had called them habits.<sup>233</sup> And Ulrich of Strasbourg, the pupil of the Universal Doctor, followed his teacher in every important regard.<sup>234</sup>

It is to this vast quantity of matter, ponderous, unwieldy,

*Epist. ad Rom.*, Cap. I, v. 22 (PL XVII, 61); *Comment. in Epist. ad Philipp.*, Cap. II, vv. 11-14 (PL XVII, 435); *Liber de Virginitate*, Cap. II, n. 9 (PL XVI, 282); *Comment. in Epist. I ad Tim.*, Cap. II, vv. 1-4 (PL XVII, 492-493).

<sup>226</sup> E. g., *Sermo CCCLI*, Cap. IV, n. 9 (PL XXXIX, 1545); *De Sancta Virginitate*, Cap. VIII (PL XL, 400); *De Catechizandis Rudibus*, Cap. I, n. 2 (PL XL, 311).

<sup>227</sup> e. g., for Gregory: *Hom. in Ezechielem*, Lib. II, Hom. IX, n. 2 (PL LXXVI, 1043); *In Primum Regum Expositionis*, Lib. IV, Cap. IV, n. 37 (PL LXXXIX, 257). For Bernard: *Sermones in Cantica*, Sermo XVIII, n. 5 (PL CLXXXIII, 816); *ibid.*, Sermo XI, n. 1 (PL 824); *Sermones de diversis*, Sermo XC, n. 3 (PL CLXXXIII, 709).

<sup>228</sup> *De Modo Orandi*, Cap. I (PL CLXXVI, 978, 979).

<sup>229</sup> *De Eruditione Hominis Interioris*, Lib. II, Cap. IX (PL CXCVI, 1308).

<sup>230</sup> *Lib. Sententiarum*, Lib. III, Dist. XXV, Cap. I.

<sup>231</sup> e. g., *Summa Theologica*, Vol. IV, pars 4, q. 26, memb. 1, a. 1.; *ibid.*, ad lum; *ibid.*, q. 2, memb. 3, a. 2.

<sup>232</sup> *Comment. in III Sent.*, d. 9, a. 2, q. 3.

<sup>233</sup> *Comment. in IV Sent.*, d. 4, a. 2, q. 1; *ibid.*, d. 4, a. 2, ad quaest. 1.

<sup>234</sup> *Summa de Bono*, lib. VI, tract. 4, cap. 7 (Paris Bibl. Nat. lat. 15901).



uncrystalized, that the Angelic Doctor has given form and perfect order. Saint Thomas was like an artist who sat before a painting of a human face. The picture seemed to be complete. The pigment was there. The outlines were all there. It was a human face. Yet somehow it was incomplete. Some one thing was wanting—some small shadow it may have been to give proportion to the parts, some slightest touch to give significance and depth, a high light perhaps to make it lifelike. And Thomas with a master's hand supplied the touch of light or shadow. Under his hand the picture was at last complete. Now there is proportion. There is meaning. There is depth. The picture comes to life.

The doctrine of the Angelic Doctor makes of devotion one thing, yet in that one thing is included everything that has relation to devotion. Devotion is an act. It is the first and principal act of the virtue of religion. It must, therefore, precede and modify not only every elicited act of the virtue of religion but every imperated act as well—every act, that is to say, which is ordered to the worship of God. Immediately every virtue or act which can become matter of worship assumes its proper perspective with regard to devotion. Clarified, too, is the insistence of the predecessors of Saint Thomas on the connection between devotion and prayer, adoration, sacrifice, merit, the sacraments, the moral virtues and, especially, the theological virtues, which last seemed to offer special difficulties. By determining the effects of devotion Saint Thomas precludes the apparent need of division in the act of devotion itself—division which Albert the Great, Bonaventure and Ulrich of Strasbourg, and even Saint Thomas in his earlier works had made.

There remains the very important question of the exact significance of the promptitude in the service of God which is called devotion by Saint Thomas. Then since the importance of devotion to the Christian has been mentioned so frequently a few conclusions on this point will be indicated.

#### IV. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ACT OF DEVOTION AND THE RELATION OF DEVOTION TO PERFECTION

1. *The significance of the Act of Devotion.* From the Angelic Doctor's teaching on devotion in the *Summa* three things are perfectly clear: devotion is an act; it is a special act; and it is an act of religion. Difficulties arise on each of these points and in order to solve them and to understand fully all that is contained in the act of devotion, recourse will be had to the commentaries of

Cajetan and John of Saint Thomas on the teaching of the Angelic Doctor.

Cajetan proposes the first difficulty thus:

The name of any thing does not signify several things but only the one thing which is contained in its meaning. Hence either devotion signifies the act of the will or it signifies the quality of promptitude. It seems that it cannot signify both. For if it signifies the act, since no act of the will (unless perhaps a natural act, which devotion certainly is not) is prompt except by reason of a habit infused or acquired or by reason of some particular natural inclination, it follows that devotion does not signify a prompt will. If, on the other hand, it signifies promptitude, since promptitude is not an act but a quality or mode of action, it follows that devotion is not a special act of the will.<sup>235</sup>

John of Saint Thomas proposes the same difficulty, perhaps more clearly:

Since devotion implies a certain formality, the question arises as to just what this thing is that devotion formally signifies. Is it formally an act or formally a mode? And in either case is it general or special? Hence Saint Thomas asks: "Is devotion a special act?" With regard to the word 'special' does it pertain or is it reducible to one of the acts of the will or is it something general in them?<sup>236</sup>

To give Cajetan's answer first:

Just as the curve of the nose does not signify curvedness in general but a curvedness in a well-determined place, namely, in the nose, so devotion formally signifies promptitude, not in general, nor in every act of every potency whatever it may be, but in the act and only the act of the will, and even in the will, not in any manner whatever but only in that act by which the will offers itself and all its actions as an act of worship of God.

<sup>235</sup> Dubium occurrit pro conclusione et ratione, pro quanto dicitur quod devotio est specialis actus voluntatis, et quod prompta voluntas etc. Nam cum omne nomen unum significet, ut dicitur in *XI Metaphys.*, aut devotio significat ipsum actum voluntatis: aut qualitatem eius, puta promptitudinem. Si significat actum, cum nullus actus voluntatis (nisi forte naturalis, quem constat non esse devotionem) sit promptus, sed sit ex habitu infuso vel acquisito vel inclinatione aliqua particulari promptus; sequitur quod devotio non significat promptam voluntatem.—Si vero significat promptitudinem, cum promptitudo non sit actus sed qualitas seu modus actus, sequitur quod devotio non sit actus sed qualitas seu modus actus, sequitur quod devotio non sit specialis actus voluntatis (Cajetan. *Op. cit.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 1).

<sup>236</sup> Cum devotio importat formalitatem quamdam, de qua dubitari potest, an sit actus, vel modus actus; et an sit generalis, vel specialis ideo Sanctus Thomas inquit in hoc articulo, an devotio sit specialis actus; et quantum ad ly actus, utrum distinguatur a modo, et importat substantialiter actum et quantum ad ly specialis, an pertineat vel reducat ad aliquem ex nominatis actibus voluntatis, vel sit aliquid generale in illis (John of Saint Thomas. *Op. cit.*, t. 7, disp. 20, art. 1, n. 1).

So devotion signifies both the act and the quality and there is no opposition, for they are differently understood. It signifies the quality in this special and particular act, just as the curvedness signifies the form in a determined material. Just as the virtue of religion is the quality of a potency, so its proper act is the quality of an act of that potency. And the same thing is seen to be true of other acts to which special names are not given but which are designated by adverbial circumlocutions describing goodness or rectitude such as, well advised, rightly commanded or moderately desired. And the same thing is to be said of the act of devotion.<sup>237</sup>

An observation of John of Saint Thomas adds clarity to one of the arguments of the Angelic Doctor. "If," he says, "devotion were only a mode residing in all acts, it would not give to them a special title for merit but only a special mode of merit. Therefore devotion implies a special act."<sup>238</sup>

Cajetan clearly determined the relation of the act itself to the promptitude of the act in devotion but the resolution of two most important questions was left for John of Saint Thomas. First, does devotion consist formally in the act or in the promptitude which it adds over and above the act? For, if it consists only in the act, how is it different from the will to worship God which is common to every act of religion? Secondly, precisely what is the nature of the promptitude of devotion? Does it signify the ease and joy of action which is had in the operation of every habit? Or is it a special promptitude proper to this act of devotion? If the answer to the question be affirmative, why should devotion have a special

<sup>237</sup> Sicut simitas significat curvitatē non absolute, sed in certa materia, scilicet naso; ita devotio formaliter significat promptitudinem, non absolute, nec in quocumque actu cujuscumque potentiae, sed in actu voluntatis non quocumque, sed illo quo voluntas se suaque omnia opera in divino cultu offert Deo. Et sic utrumque verum est, et neutrum alteri adversatur, diversimode intellectum: quod scilicet et qualitatem et actum importat, dum significat qualitatem in tali actu speciali, sicut simitas curvitatē in tali speciali materia. Ratio autem quae me movet ad hoc est quia devotio, ut in sequenti patet articulo, est actus religionis. Constat autem quod sicut religio est qualitas potentiae, ita actus proprius religionis est qualitas actus potentiae. Sic enim in aliis virtutibus videmus; ut patet de scire in intellectu speculativo et providere in intellectu practico, iustificatione in voluntate, et aliis hujusmodi propriis actibus virtutum, quibus nomina non sunt imposita propria, sed circumloquimur eos cum nomine vel adverbio bonitatis aut rectitudinis, ut bona consiliatio, recte praecipere, moderate appetere, etc. Est enim videre actus proprios virtutum qualitatem seu modum substantiae actus potentiae significare. Et propterea sic est in proposito dicendum de devotione (*Loc. cit.*).

<sup>238</sup> Si enim devotio solum esset modus transcendens per omnes actus non adderet illis specialem rationem meriti, sed specialem modificationem meriti. Ergo debet importare specialem actum in quod substantialiter consistat devotio (John of Saint Thomas. *Loc. cit.* n. 3).

promptitude other than that which comes from the habit of religion? <sup>239</sup>

In answer to these questions John of Saint Thomas says that promptitude may be taken in two senses: first, as it signifies a quality in the operation of the subject; secondly, as it signifies something in the object to which the subject is moved and disposes itself. The first meaning of promptitude is that of a disposition of the subject by which it is given ease and readiness of action and by which impediments are removed. This promptitude is ordinarily given by habits or even by a natural disposition and has no place in this explanation. The other promptitude which has regard to the ordination of the subject to some object is difficult to explain and different explanations have been given of it.<sup>240</sup>

John of Saint Thomas goes on to give various opinions concerning this promptitude:

Some consider this promptitude to be a willingness or an act of the will having for its object a prompt worship of God or in other words a will to give themselves to the worship of God promptly and easily. Others have thought that the promptitude of devotion was nothing more than the affection itself or the love by which someone is moved to performing acts of worship of God.<sup>241</sup>

Suarez in attempting to explain this promptitude had recourse to the idea of deliberation before the act. John of Saint Thomas in explaining his opinion says that he considered devotion "to be nothing more than a deliberate affection for the worship of God,

<sup>239</sup> Tota difficultas circa hanc rationem . . . reducitur ad duo. Primum, an devotio formaliter consistat in actu, vel in promptitudine, quam addit super actum, nam si consistat solum in actu, non est aliud quam velle obsequium Dei, seu tradere se obsequio Dei: et hoc est actus communis religionis; et sic devotio substantialiter accepta pro ipso velle, non est specialis actus religionis: secundum, quid sit illa promptitudo, an sc. sit agere faciliter, et delectabiliter, quid non est aliud quam operari ex habitu; non vero importat actum specialem; an vero sit aliquid additum ipsi actui, et hoc non apparet quid sit, ratione cuius sit ponendus specialis actus (*Ibid.*, n. 4).

<sup>240</sup> Promptitudo potest accipi vel ex parte subjecti in ordine ad agendum, vel ex parte subjecti in ordine ad aliquod objectum, cui afficitur, et ordinat se. Primo modo importat dispositionem subjecti, seu potentiae agentis, qua redditur facilis, et expedita ad agendum sublatis impedimentis, et hoc fit communiter per habitum, vel per aliquam naturalem vim qualis est solertia . . . et de hac promptitudine non est sermo hic. Promptitudo autem subjecti in ordine ad aliquod objectum difficilis valde est ad explicandum et miror quantum recentiorum ingenia torserit (*Ibid.*, n. 5).

<sup>241</sup> Quidam enim censent esse volitionem, seu actum voluntatis, habentem pro objecto promptum famulatum Dei, seu velle exequi et exercere ipsum obsequium Dei prompte et facile . . . alii censent promptitudinem hac nihil aliud esse quam affectum ipsum, et morem, quo quis in exercitio afficitur ad cultum (*Ibid.*).

because as long as one does not deliberate either way, he will not have a prompt will to do a thing. But after deliberation his will is made prompt. Hence devotion consists in that promptitude which is a deliberate act and may be called the promptitude of deliberation."<sup>242</sup> The words of Suarez himself are:

The will as long as it does not deliberate on a thing and is not affected by it is not prompt in operation. But as soon as it makes its decree and offers itself to some work, it is by reason of that very act rendered prompt if the act or its force endures and is not changed. Hence this is the sense in which devotion is to be said to consist in promptitude in divine worship.<sup>243</sup>

John of Saint Thomas describes lastly an opinion by which the promptitude of devotion is called an objective promptitude and which is explained as a will to serve God not in any way whatever but in a perfect and heroic degree.<sup>244</sup>

The Spanish Commentator rejects all those opinions as not being in accord with the mind of the Angelic Doctor. Devotion must differ from a mere affection for the worship of God. Otherwise it would not be a special act. Likewise with regard to the opinion of Suarez, a deliberated act does not make a difference which constitutes devotion as a special act of religion. Every act of that virtue is voluntary and has its morality. Therefore every act must be deliberate. Furthermore, as Saint Thomas himself said, devotion is from the word signifying dedicated not from deliberated.<sup>245</sup> As for the opinion that devotion is the will to serve God in a perfect and heroic degree, it need only be said that devotion is to be found in those who are imperfect in virtue and religion. It is not found only

<sup>242</sup> Et ut tandem explicetur, nihil est aliud quam affectus deliberatus circa obsequium divinum, quia quamdiu quis in neutram partem deliberat, nondum habet promptam voluntatem ad aliquid praestandum: postquam vero decrevit et deliberavit redditur voluntas prompta ad faciendum aliquid. Et ita devotio consistit in promptitudine, quae sit actus deliberatus, et vocatur promptitudo deliberationis (*Ibid.*, n. 6).

<sup>243</sup> Voluntas enim quamdiu in neutram partem deliberat, vel afficitur, non est prompta ad aliquod munus praestandum, at postquam decrevit et se offert ad aliquod munus, ex vi illius actus prompta est, si actus, vel virtus ejus duret, et non mutetur. Unde in hoc sensu fatemur devotionem consistere in promptitudine ad divinum obsequium (Suarez, *Commentarium in Summa Theol.*, t. 2, de Religione, lib. 2, chap. 6, n. 7).

<sup>244</sup> Quidam tenent, promptitudinem objectivam . . . et explicant per hoc quod est velle non . . . quomodocumque sed in gradu perfecto et heroico (John of Saint Thomas. *Op. cit.*, t. 7, disp. 20, art. 1, n. 10).

<sup>245</sup> Sed haec omnia minus attingunt mentem Sancti Doctoris, actum enim esse deliberatum, non est differentia constituens specialem actum religionis. Omnes enim actus illius voluntarii, et morales sunt . . . Itaque devotio a devovendo dicitur, non a deliberando (*Ibid.*, n. 7).

in those who are perfect or who have progressed some way in perfection. It is also to be found in those who are just beginning.<sup>246</sup> And, while devotion is the first and principal act of religion, it is nevertheless to be found in all the acts of religion and so is not heroic any more than the principal act of prudence, which is the act of commanding, is heroic.<sup>247</sup>

John of Saint Thomas then goes on to give his own explanation of the promptitude of devotion.

The promptitude which devotion implies, is an act which follows the deliberate will to serve, that is, the offering of a ready will prepared to serve another. Thus that act has for its object the worship of God. But just as in the worship of God different things are offered to God, as, for example, the intellect by prayer, the body by adoration, external goods by sacrifice, so by devotion the will itself is offered and because it is the first thing offered in the proffering of anything, it is placed by Saint Thomas as the first act of religion. Therefore that act which has for the matter to be offered in the worship of God man's own will, is called devotion.<sup>248</sup>

The Spanish Commentator then goes on to explain the reason for a special promptitude in devotion—the reason why the ordinary promptitude of the habit is not sufficient. He says that the will is not able to be offered in the service of another unless it has readiness, that is, unless the impediments by which it might be retarded are removed. Hence the act by which the will is offered ought to be modified and perfected by a certain promptitude, that is an ease and readiness to serve. This promptitude is to be found both in the object which is offered—a ready will to serve—and in the act by which it is offered which has readiness and promptitude.<sup>249</sup> The

<sup>246</sup> Similiter devotio non est actus heroicus, cum constet inveniri devotionem, etiam in his, qui sunt imperfectae virtutis, et religionis; invenitur enim non solum in perfectis, et proficientibus sed etiam in incipientibus (*ibid.*, n. 8).

<sup>247</sup> Etsi devotio sit principalis actus et primus inter actus religionis, est tamen communis omnibus, et ideo non est heroicus, sicut principalis actus prudentiae est praecipere non tamen est actus heroicus (*Ibid.*).

<sup>248</sup> Quare promptitudo, quam importat devotio in ordine ad objectum, cui aliquis se devovet. . . . est actus qui consequitur ad deliberationem serviendi, i. e., oblatio voluntatis expeditae, et praeparatae ad deservendum alteri. Itaque ille actus habet pro objecto cultum Dei; sed sicut ad istum cultum offerimus Deo diversas materias; ut per orationem offerimus, et subjicimus intellectum Deo, per adorationem corpus, per sacrificium bona externa; sic per devotionem offerimus voluntatem, quae quia est primum quod offertur in obsequium alicujus, ideo ponitur a D. Thomas primus actus religionis. Igitur actus, qui habet pro materia oblata in ordine ad cultum, et obsequium Dei, voluntatem propriam, dicitur devotio, quasi applicatio quaedam voluntatis ad obsequium (*Ibid.*, n. 9).

<sup>249</sup> Et quia voluntas offeri non potest ad deservendum alteri nisi sit expedita, i. e., sint oblata impedimenta, quibus retardari potest ab eo, cui se tradit ad deservendum; ideo actus offerens voluntatem debet esse modificatus, et perfectus quadam prompti-

reason, therefore, why there is a special promptitude in the act of devotion is because by that act the will itself is offered to God. And since it is impossible to conceive of sluggishness in such an offering, a special promptitude is to be found in devotion. Sluggishness might be found in the acts leading up to the act of devotion, but devotion itself must be prompt.

The important point upon which John of Saint Thomas insists is that everything concerning devotion comes from the virtue of religion. The act, the mode of the offering, and the promptitude—all come from religion; it is not to be thought that the mode of the act comes from religion and the substance of the act from the potency behind religion, that is, the will. The act of devotion is wholly an act of the virtue of religion.<sup>250</sup> And lest Cajetan be misinterpreted on this point, the Spanish Commentator explains his meaning:

When Cajetan spoke of adverbial circumlocutions describing the quality of an act,<sup>251</sup> he did not understand by this mode or quality of the act something coming to the act from the habit but he understood the relation of the act to a modified object, just, for example, as the expression "well-advised" does not signify the idea of being advised with a mode coming to it from the habit. It rather signifies the act with relation to a modified object. And this modification in the case of devotion is promptitude accepted in relation to the object. It does not need the reflexive act of the will any more than does the act of prayer which offers and raises the intellect to God.<sup>252</sup>

He says in further explanation:

This offering in devotion is substantially an act and it is to be understood as an act and not as a mode, just as the act which offers the intellect to God or any other act which offers other matter to God. Nevertheless, devotion implies the mode of promptitude, not indeed as something accidentally attached to it, but as that which is included in the very relation

tudine, seu facilitate, et praeparatione ad serviendum, quae promptitudo, et reluctet ex parte objecti, seu materiae oblatae, quia offertur voluntas expedita ad serviendum; et reluctet ex parte actus, quia est oblatio cum expeditione, et promptitudine (*Ibid.*, n. 10).

<sup>250</sup> Totum hoc sc., actus, et modus oblatio, et promptitudo procedit a religione, non autem modus a religione, et substantia actus a potentia (*Ibid.*, n. 11).

<sup>251</sup> Cf. p. 239.

<sup>252</sup> Cajetanus non intellexit per modum, seu qualitatem actus aliquid proveniens ab habitu in ipsum actum, et ei affixum, sed intellexit habitudinem actus ad objectum modificatum . . . Sicut recte consiliari, non est consilium cum modo superveniente ipsi ab habitu, sed actus cum habitudine ad objectum modificatum. Et haec est promptitudo intrinseca et in ordine ad objectum sumpta, ad quam non magis requiritur actus reflexus cadens super voluntatem, quam ad actum orationis quae offert, et elevat mentem Deo (John of St. Thomas. *Loc. cit.*, n. 12).

of the act to the object, for the matter offered is itself prompt, the will; and the act regards the matter under the aspect of promptitude.<sup>253</sup>

He insists again upon the speciality of this promptitude in the act of devotion, saying that this promptitude or readiness to serve is rather to be found in the will, which moves the other potencies, than in the intellect or anything else that is offered to God.<sup>254</sup>

There remains to be considered the difficulty with regard to devotion being an act of religion. It seems that this cannot be true because of the fact that devotion is so often spoken of as though it were connected with other virtues. John of Saint Thomas thus expresses the general principle that solves this difficulty: "Many more acts follow from the act of devotion and it impresses its mode of devout service on them, than follow from any of the other acts of religion."<sup>255</sup> He says in particular:

Oblation is an act of servitude and subjection to the one to whom it is offered. Devotion therefore as an act pertains only to the virtue of servitude or of oblation to God, that is, to the virtue of religion. Therefore, it pertains to charity in the measure that it is imperated by charity—just as the acts of other virtues pertain to charity. With regard to obedience, this virtue as it is a special virtue is not concerned with offering a ready will as an oblation to God, but only with observance of the precepts of a superior, that is, it is concerned with honoring and revering the precepts of a superior. And thus it has nothing to do with the worship of God. When one is said to obey devoutly or to perform devoutly the act of any virtue, devotion is to be understood either as the mode of promptitude common to every habit and virtue or as the effect of devotion insofar as it is the act of religion commanding and therefore modifying other virtues, for devotion is not any prompt act whatever. It is the oblation and offering of a prompt will to worship God.<sup>256</sup>

<sup>253</sup> Et talis oblatio (devotio) substantialiter est actus, et supponit pro actu, et non pro modo sicut oratio offerens mentem, vel quicumque alius actus offerens aliam materiam: importat tamen modum promptitudinis, non qui accidentaliter sibi adveniat, sed qui in ipsa habitudine ad objectum includitur, quia fertur ad meritam promptam et secundum promptitudinem respicit illam (*Ibid.*, n. 13).

<sup>254</sup> Sicut etiam promptitudo, vel expeditio ad serviendum magis invenitur in voluntate, quae movet caeteras potentias, quam in intellectu, vel aliis rebus, quae Deo offeruntur (*Ibid.*).

<sup>255</sup> Et similiter magis ex isto actu sequuntur alii, et imprimatur illis modus devote serviendi, quam per alios actus religionis (*Ibid.*, n. 14).

<sup>256</sup> Oblatio autem est actus servitutis, et obsequii respectu ejus, cui offertur; devotio ergo pro actu, solum pertinet ad virtutem servientem, seu offerentem, quae respectu Dei est religio; ad charitatem autem solum potest pertinere imperative, sicut et actus aliarum virtutum; ad obedientiam vero prout est specialis virtus non pertinet ad offerre voluntatem expeditam ad obsequium, sed tantum habere observantiam ad praecepta superioris, quae est honorare, et revereri praecepta; et ita non respicit cultum, et reverentiam Dei, et obsequium ejus. Quod autem dicantur



2. *Devotion and Perfection.* From what has been said of devotion both in itself and in its relationship to other acts and to the virtues, it is quite clear that this act of religion has a very intimate connection with Christian perfection. A brief consideration of all that the act of devotion implies will make this fact even more evident.

John of Saint Thomas, it will be remembered, defined the act of devotion as the offering of the will itself. Because devotion is an act of the virtue of religion, its offering is formally not that of a friend of God but that of one of His creatures. It is the oblation of the whole will—the will in its entirety. It is the perfect holocaust of the intellectual creature. Devotion is pure willing. It has no other material than the will to offer.

But morally speaking the will is the whole man, for when the will is inclined toward God, the whole man is so inclined; the opposite is true when the will embraces evil. Devotion, then, this centering of the will wholly on honoring God, is the concentration of the whole man on the act which is most appropriate to the intelligent creature.

Because it is the act of a moral virtue, devotion is concerned, relative to the acts of the theological virtues, with means rather than with end. Thus it is essentially a choice. It is the willing and eager, yet deliberate subjection of a free created being.

Devotion is not a mere intention to worship God. It is important to understand this. Neither is it like a vow which promises something to God. The greatest worship of which man is capable is realized in the very act of devotion. Devotion *is* the offering.

Devotion has been defined as promptitude. It is, of course, a promptitude which is rather psychological than temporal. And it is this psychological readiness and completeness of offering with which devotion stamps all the acts which the virtue of religion commands. Devotion supplies the impulse to all the other acts of religion. They all exist for the sake of devotion. They are means of expressing interior homage—that is to say, means of realizing devotion.

From this purpose of all other acts of religion it follows that they have no valid existence except as ministers to devotion. Devotion is their criterion and their standard. Those acts of worship which further true devotion, true holocaust of the will, should be guarded

aliqui devote obedire aut devote facere opera virtutum; vel accipitur devotio pro modo promptitudinis communi omni habitui, et virtuti, vel pro effectu devotionis, quatenus est actus religionis imperans et imprimens caeteris virtutibus . . . devotio non dicit actum promptum quomocumque, sed oblationem, et exhibitionem promptae voluntatis (*Ibid.*, a. 2, n. 8).

jealously. Others should not be tolerated. That devotion is the criterion and standard of all other acts of religion means more than merely tearing out by the roots sentimental and shallow practices in worship. It means teaching an appreciation for the solid liturgy of the Church. It means the encouragement of truly liturgical devotions.

That devotion is the criterion and standard of all other acts of religion means also that the frequency and the duration of other acts of religion are to be measured by their success or failure to contribute to true devotion. Even prayer must be regulated by this first and principal act of religion. St. Thomas called devotion the "yardstick of prayer." Devotion then is not the principal act of religion because it is spiritual while others are corporeal but rather because of the impulse that it gives to them. Thus devotion is principal even with regard to prayer which is also a spiritual act.

The tendency to consider devotion all-important to perfection led some of the predecessors of Saint Thomas to identify devotion and charity. Two truths must be borne in mind in this matter. First, devotion is in no sense identical with charity. Devotion belongs not to a theological virtue but to a moral one. Secondly, it must be insisted upon that Christian perfection consists formally in charity. What then is the place of the virtue of religion and the act of devotion in perfection? Is devotion any more important than the principal act of any other virtue?

These questions may best be answered by recalling the place of charity in the plan of Christian perfection. Christian perfection is a participation of the perfection of God. The more a creature participates the divine life the more perfect that creature is. Since God is pure act, the creature is more like to God when he is in act than when he is only in potency to act. For this reason it is in the act of charity rather than in the habit that perfection formally consists. Perfection is said to consist formally in the act of charity because in that one act all that pertains to Christian perfection is summed up and contained.

Now devotion has the same important place in a restricted field of operation that the act of charity has in the whole scope of the Christian life. Christian perfection consists formally in the act of charity. By an almost perfect parallel it must be said that moral perfection consists formally in the act of devotion. Devotion does for the moral virtues what charity does for all the virtues. In the province of moral perfection, that is, in the perfect operation of the moral virtues, religion and devotion are supreme. Religion is the highest moral virtue and devotion is religion in its pure state, just as the act of charity is total perfection in its pure state. Just

as charity sums up and contains Christian perfection as a whole, so devotion sums up and contains moral perfection—the perfect operation of the moral virtues.

Saint Thomas has assigned a name to this perfection in the moral virtues. He has called it *sanctitas*. And he defines *sanctitas*—insofar as it differs from the virtue of religion at all—as the virtue of religion ordaining all the acts of all the virtues to the worship of God.<sup>257</sup> Devotion is the seed of which moral perfection is the flower. It is interesting to note a statement of Cajetan in this regard. He says that there are three acts of the will with regard to the end—volition, enjoyment and intention. Devotion corresponds to volition—not just any volition but that which has for an end God and which has for means and for object itself and all its possessions to be offered in worshiping God, for volition is sometimes concerned with more than the end considered in itself. It includes the end as it is to be found in the means to the end. And this is the kind of act devotion is. It concerns the end and includes the means to the end, namely the thing offered—man himself, and that in which he offers himself—in the worship of God.<sup>258</sup>

It must be remembered that the imperating power of religion is not restricted to the acts of the moral virtues but transcends these to embrace and employ the acts of the lofty theological virtues themselves. In formalizing, therefore, in essentially including within itself, Christian perfection, devotion is second only to charity. The true relation of perfection to charity and to devotion can best be explained by a figure that is as old almost as Christianity itself. Devotion belongs to the handmaid; charity to the spouse. This is not true in the sense that the handmaid is without charity or that the spouse can neglect devotion. But it is true in the sense that devotion is emphasized in a special way in one and charity in the other. Both are necessary. The handmaid in the Christian dispensation is already a spouse. And the spouse cannot cease to be a handmaid in the service of her lord, for her lord is God. To return to the words of Cajetan:

The inferior in its highest operation attains to the condition of its superior. As the mind of man in its supreme act understands without discursive reasoning, so the supreme moral virtue, religion, participates the nature of the theological virtues. It attains to God not as He is in Himself but as the one to Whom worship is due.<sup>259</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 8, c.

<sup>258</sup> Cajetan, *op. cit.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 1, n. 3.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*, q. 81, a. 5.

