

APPENDIX ONE

A Survey of Magisterial Support  
for St. Thomas Aquinas

The following text is meant to be a survey of significant magisterial references concerning St. Thomas Aquinas, the "Apostle of truth," and his writings. The magisterial citations were organized in chronological order from the thirteenth to the twenty-first century to demonstrate the Church's accumulative and consistent affirmation of his work. The Church calls St. Thomas Aquinas the "perfect theologian" and the "Prince of teachers." As one Pontiff directed, "Go to Thomas," so thus we begin our journey by tracing the love and admiration of the Church for this "heavenly patron of the highest studies."

1254 Alexander IV

"To Our beloved son, Thomas Aquinas, distinguished alike for nobility of blood and integrity of character, who has acquired by the grace of God the treasure of divine and human learning."<sup>1</sup>

1318 John XXII

Consistorial Address

Pope John XXII declares Aquinas' doctrine miraculous: "He alone enlightened the Church more than all other doctors;

<sup>1</sup> Alexander IV was Pope during Aquinas' lifetime; he was the first pope to speak about Aquinas according to Pius XI in *Studiorum Ducem* #10.

a man can derive more profit in a year from his books than from pondering all his life the teaching of others."<sup>2</sup>

"Why should we seek more miracles? He has performed as many miracles as he wrote articles. Truly this glorious Doctor, after the Apostles and the early Doctors, has greatly enlightened the Church."<sup>3</sup>

1323 *Redemptionem misit Dominus*

In this Bull, Pope John XXII canonizes Thomas Aquinas.<sup>4</sup>

1344- Clement VI

1346 *Bull In Ordine Fratrum, Praedicatorum*

Pope Clement VI orders the Friars Preachers not to deviate from the doctrine of St. Thomas.<sup>5</sup>

"That famous and fruitful branch, the blessed Thomas of Aquin, outstanding doctor and confessor. The whole Church, gathering many fruits of his spiritual maturity from the writing and teaching of his wisdom and doctrine, is continually refreshed by their aroma."<sup>6</sup>

1350s Innocent VI

*Serm. De St. Thoma*

"His teaching above that of others, the canonical writings alone excepted, enjoys such a precision of language, an order of matters, a truth of conclusions, that those who hold to it are never found swerving from the path of truth, and he who dare assail it will always be suspected of error."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>2</sup> As quoted by Pius XI in *Stud. Ducem* #10; St. Pius X also quotes this emphatic statement of John XXII in *Doctoris Angelici*.

<sup>3</sup> P. Percin, *Monumenta Conventus Tolosani Ord. Praed.*, cf. J. Berthier, op. cit., 50.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Maritain, *Append. II*, page 219.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Maritain, *Append. II*, page 219.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Berthier, op. cit., 55.

<sup>7</sup> *Serm. De S. Thoma.*; quoted by Leo XIII in *Aeterni Patris* #21.

1368 Urban V

*Address to the University of Toulouse*

"It is our will, which we hereby enjoin upon you, that you follow the teaching of Blessed Thomas as the true and Catholic doctrine, and that you labor with all your force to profit by the same."<sup>8</sup>

1406 Innocent VII

*Const. Duecens reputamus*

Pope Innocent VII confirms the doctrine of the Friars Preachers, which is the doctrine of St. Thomas.<sup>9</sup>

1451 Nicholas V

*Brief to the Friars of the Order of Preachers*

In this Brief, Pope Nicholas V celebrates the wisdom of St. Thomas Aquinas, and honors the Dominicans for remaining faithful to his teaching.<sup>10</sup>

1537- Council of Trent

1563 According to Pope Leo XIII, "the chief and special glory of Thomas, one which he has shared with none of the Catholic Doctors, is that the Fathers of Trent made it part of the order of conclave to lay upon the altar, together with Sacred Scripture and the decrees of the supreme Pontiffs, the '*Summa*' of St. Thomas, whence to seek council, reason, and inspiration."<sup>11</sup>

As Pope Pius XI confirms, "the Fathers of Trent resolved that two volumes only, Holy Scripture and the *Summa Theologica*, should be reverently laid open on the altar during their deliberations."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *Const. 5a dat. Die Aug. 3, 1368 ad Concell, Univ. Tolo*; as quoted by Leo XIII in *Aet. Pat.* #21.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Maritain, *Append. II*, page 220.

<sup>10</sup> Cited in *Aet. Pat.* #21.

<sup>11</sup> Cited in Leo XIII's *Aet. Pat.* #22.

<sup>12</sup> Cited in Pius XI's *Stud. Doc.* #11.

- 1567 **St. Pius V**  
**Const., Bull, *Mirabilis Deus***  
 St. Pius V is the first to proclaim the feast of St. Thomas as Doctor.<sup>13</sup>  
 "But in as much as, by the providence of Almighty God, the power and truth of the philosophy of the Angelic Doctor, ever since his enrollment amongst the citizens of Heaven, have confounded, refuted, and routed many subsequent heresies, as was so often clearly seen in the past and was lately apparent in the sacred decrees of the Council of Trent. We order that the memory of the Doctor by whose valor the world is daily delivered from pestilent errors be cultivated more than ever before with feelings of pious and grateful devotion."<sup>14</sup>  
 St. Pius V was the first to call Aquinas "Doctor of the Church" and "Angelic Doctor."<sup>15</sup>
- 1570 St. Pius V also ordered an edition of the complete works of St. Thomas.<sup>16</sup>  
**Bull *In eminenti***  
 He also said of Aquinas that "his theological doctrine, accepted by the Catholic Church, *outshines every other as being safer and more secure.*"<sup>17</sup>
- 1588 **Sixtus V**  
**Bull *Triumphantis***  
 "By the divine favor of Him who alone gives the spirit of science, and wisdom, and understanding, and who through all ages, as there may be need, enriches His Church with

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Maritain, Append. II, page 220.

<sup>14</sup> As cited by St. Pius X in *Doc. Angel.* and also cited by Leo XIII in *Aet. Pat.* #21.

<sup>15</sup> Pius XI also cites this in *Stud. Doc.* #11; Pope John Paul II also reiterates this in his *Address to the International Society of St. Thomas Aquinas* #4 given in 1979.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Maritain, Append. II, page 220.

<sup>17</sup> Bull *In eminenti*, July 29, 1570, op. cit., 99.

new blessings and strengthens it with new safeguards, there was founded by our fathers, men of eminent wisdom, the scholastic theology, which two glorious doctors in particular, the angelic St. Thomas and the seraphic St. Bonaventure, illustrious teachers of this faculty, ... with surpassing genius, by unwearied diligence, and at the cost of long labors and vigils, set in order and beautified, and, when skillfully arranged and clearly explained in a variety of ways, handed down to posterity."<sup>18</sup>

Pope Sixtus V discussed that what gave scholastic theology its irreducible power against the enemies of truth was "that ready and close coherence of cause and effect, that order and array as of a disciplined army in battle, those clear definitions and distinctions, that strength of argument and those keen discussions, by which light is distinguished from darkness, the true from the false, expose and strip naked, as it were, the falsehoods of heretics wrapped around by a cloud of subterfuges and fallacies."<sup>19</sup>

- 1594 **Clement VIII**  
 Pope Clement VIII recommends the Fathers of the Society of Jesus to adhere to St. Thomas.<sup>20</sup>
- 1603 **Bull *Sicut Angeli***  
 "The proof of his doctrine is the great number of books which he wrote in a very short time, in practically every branch of learning, with remarkable order and wonderful planning, and *with no error at all.* While writing these works he had the holy Apostles Peter and Paul speaking to him and at the command of God they explained certain passages to him. When he finished his works, he heard them approved by the express word of Christ the Lord."<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> As quoted by Leo XIII in *Aet. Pat.* #14.

<sup>19</sup> As quoted by Leo XIII in *Aet. Pat.* #16.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Maritain, Appen. II, pages 220-221.

<sup>21</sup> Bull *Sicut Angeli*, Nov. 22, 1603, op. cit., 112.



- 1607/ Paul V  
 1614 **Bull *Splendidissiums athleta***  
 In speaking about Aquinas' works: "By the shield of whose works the Church Militant happily escaped the darts of heretics."<sup>22</sup>  
**Bull *Cum sicut***  
 Called Aquinas "defender of the Catholic Church and conqueror of heretics."<sup>23</sup>
- 1694 **Innocent XII**  
 In this Letter in the form of a Brief, Pope Innocent XII addresses the University of Louvain enjoining them to follow the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas.<sup>24</sup>
- 1718 **Clement XI**  
**Const. *Inscrutabili***  
 Pope Clement XI gives his solemn approbation to the statutes of the Academy of St. Thomas in Rome.<sup>25</sup>
- 1724 **Benedict XIII**  
**Bull *Demissas preces***  
 "Pursue with energy your Doctor's works, more brilliant than the sun and written without the shadow of error. These works made the Church illustrious with wonderful erudition, since they march ahead and proceed with unimpeded step, protecting and vindicating by that surest rule of Christian doctrine, the truth of our holy religion."<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Bull *Splendidissiums athleta*, Sept. 17, 1607, op. cit., 117.

<sup>23</sup> Bull *Cum sicut*, Oct. 20, 1614, ibid.

<sup>24</sup> In this he followed the example of Urban V (1368); also cited by Leo XIII in *Aet. Pat.* #21.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Maritain, Append. II, page 221.

<sup>26</sup> Bull *Demissas preces*, Nov. 6, 1724, op. cit. 147.

- 1720s **Bull *Pretiosus***  
 Benedict XIII heaped pontifical indulgences upon "the society of the *Angelic Militia* founded under the patronage of Thomas for the preservation and maintenance of holy chastity."<sup>27</sup>
- 1730s **Clement XII**  
**Bull *Verbo Dei***  
 In this Bull, Clement affirms "that most fruitful blessings have spread abroad from his (Aquinas') writings over the whole Church, and that he is worthy of the honor which is bestowed on the greatest doctors of the Church."<sup>28</sup>
- 1752 **Benedict XIV**  
 "Numerous Roman Pontiffs, Our Predecessors, have borne glorious testimony to his (Aquinas') philosophy. We also, in the books which we have written on various topics, after by diligent examination perceiving and considering the mind of the Angelic Doctor, have always adhered and subscribed with joy and admiration to his philosophy, and candidly confess that whatever good is to be found in Our own writings is in no way to be attributed to Us, but entirely to so eminent a teacher."<sup>29</sup>
- Brief to Dionysian College in Granada**  
 Benedict XIV enjoins them to follow the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas.<sup>30</sup>  
 "That henceforth none of the Masters or Lectors of the College of St. Dionysius shall read, hand down or explain any other doctrine to their students in that College."<sup>31</sup>

<sup>27</sup> As cited by Pius XI in *Stud. Doc.* #25.

<sup>28</sup> Quote taken from Leo XIII in *Aet. Pat.* #21.

<sup>29</sup> *Acta Cap. Gen. O.P.*, vol. XI, p. 196; St. Pius X (1914) adopts this statement from Benedict XIV concerning the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, more particularly the *Summa Theologiae*, as a summary of all the commendations bestowed upon him.

<sup>30</sup> Cited by Leo XIII in *Aet. Pat.* #21.

<sup>31</sup> *Brief to Dionysian College.*



1756 Constitution *Sollicita*

"The other praises of the holy Doctor are surpassed by this, that he never despised his opponents or seemed to vilify or betray them but treated all courteously and very humanely. If he came upon any of their expressions which were inaccurate, ambiguous or obscure, he would temper his criticism with a smooth and benign interpretation. If the cause of religion or faith demanded that he investigate and refute their opinion, he would accomplish the refutation with so much discretion that he deserved no less praise for his manner of disagreement than for his assertion of the Catholic truth."<sup>32</sup>

## 1777 Pius VI

## Allocution to the Dominican General Chapter

"In many schools Thomas Aquinas was rightly called the Sun of doctrine and the standard for theologians, because he taught only what was consistent with Sacred Scripture and the Fathers. Everything he wrote is worthy, as it is piously said, of divine confirmation. And so Our predecessors commended his doctrine with outstanding praises as the shield of Christian religion and the resolute guardian of the Church. Recently, Benedict XIV, whose wisdom We thoroughly admired, ordered Thomistic doctrine to be restored in the College of St. Dionysius the Areopagite outside Granada, and proposed the penalty of interdict for anyone who departed from it."<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Constitution *Sollicita*.

<sup>33</sup> *Allocution to the Dominican General Chapter*, the Pontiff presiding, May 17, 1777, op. cit., 170.

1855 Pius IX  
False Traditionalism

When the French philosopher Augustin Bonnetty, in reaction to Kantian rationalism began to spread errors of traditionalism, which accused, among other things, the writings of St. Thomas of leading to rationalism, Pope Pius IX's Sacred Congregation of the Index asked him to agree to a set of propositions which vindicated the rights of human reason.

The fourth proposition upheld the authentic philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas: "The method used by St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure and other scholastics after them does not lead to rationalism nor has it been the reason why philosophy in today's schools is falling into naturalism and pantheism. These doctors and teachers are not to be blamed for using this method, especially since they used it with the approbation or at least with the silent approval of the Church."<sup>34</sup>

1870 *Letter to the Dominican Raymond Bianchi* dated June 9  
Pope Pius IX observed "that the Church, in the ecumenical councils held after his (Aquinas') death, so used his writings that many of the decrees propounded found their source in his works; sometimes his very words were used to clarify Catholic dogmas or to destroy rising errors."<sup>35</sup>

1878 Leo XIII  
Encyclical *Inscrutabili Dei Consilio* (*On the Evils of Society*)

"Philosophy seeks not the overthrow of divine revelation, but delights rather to prepare its way, and defend it against

<sup>34</sup> Quote taken from Clarkson's *The Church Teaches* (1955), 19; cf. also ND 105; Denz. 2814.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Berthier's *Sanctus Thomas Aquinas, 'Doctor Communis Ecclesiae'* (1914) 177; also quoted in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 14, p. 110.

assailants, both by example and in written works, as the great Augustine and the Angelic Doctor, with all other teachers of Christian wisdom, have proved to us.<sup>36</sup>

1879 *Encyclical Aeterni Patris (On the Restoration of Christian Philosophy)*<sup>37</sup>

"The doctors of the Middle ages, who are called Scholastics, addressed themselves to a great work — that of diligently collecting, and sifting, and storing up, as it were, in one place, for the use and convenience of posterity the rich and fertile harvests of Christian learning scattered abroad in the voluminous works of the holy Fathers."<sup>38</sup>

"Among the Scholastic Doctors, the chief and master of all towers Aquinas, who, as Cajetan observes, because 'he most venerated the ancient doctors of the Church, in a certain way seems to have inherited the intellect of all.'<sup>39</sup> ...he is rightly and deservedly esteemed the special bulwark and glory of the Catholic faith.<sup>40</sup> With his spirit at once humble and swift, his memory ready and tenacious, his life spotless throughout, a love of truth for its own sake, richly endowed with human and divine science, like the sun he heated the world with the warmth of his virtues and filled it with the splendor of his teaching."<sup>41</sup>

"Moreover, the Angelic Doctor... single-handed... victoriously combated the errors of former times, and supplied

<sup>36</sup> Paragraph 13.

<sup>37</sup> In this encyclical, Pope Leo XIII directs Catholic theologians and philosophers to maintain, as their approved sources, the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas and Scholastic principles. To combat the movements of rationalism, secular liberalism, Kantian subjectivism, and historicism Leo XIII restored the dignity of Aquinas as the master of truth, which soon initiated the Neo-Scholastic movement beginning in Rome and Louvain.

<sup>38</sup> Paragraph 14.

<sup>39</sup> Quoted in Pius XI's *Stud. Ducem* #5.

<sup>40</sup> Also quoted and translated "the pre-eminent guardian and glory of the Catholic Church" by John Paul II in his *Address on the 100th Anniv. of Aet. Pat.* #13.

<sup>41</sup> Paragraph 17.

invincible arms to put those to rout which might in after-times spring up."<sup>42</sup>

"For these reasons most learned men... gave themselves up not so much to be instructed in his angelic wisdom as to be nourished upon it."<sup>43</sup>

"A last triumph was reserved for this incomparable man — namely, to compel the homage, praise, and admiration of even the very enemies of the Catholic name... [from whom some have said that] if the teaching of Thomas Aquinas were only taken away, they could easily battle with all Catholic teachers, gain the victory, and abolish the Church."<sup>44</sup> A vain hope, indeed, but no vain testimony."<sup>45</sup>

"Sacred theology... may be assisted and illustrated by all kinds of erudition, though it is absolutely necessary to approach it in the grave manner of the Scholastics, in order that, the forces of revelation and reason being united in it, it may continue to be 'the invincible bulwark of the faith.'"<sup>46</sup>

Leo XIII commends those who "aim at restoring the renowned teaching of Thomas Aquinas and winning it back to its ancient beauty."<sup>47</sup>

The pope then confesses that his "first and most cherished idea is that you (venerable brethren) should all furnish to studious youth a generous and copious supply of those purest streams of wisdom flowing inexhaustibly from the precious fountainhead of the Angelic Doctor."<sup>48</sup>

The hope, as he saw it, was for a more wholesome doctrine to be taught "in the universities and high schools —

<sup>42</sup> Paragraph 18.

<sup>43</sup> Paragraph 19.

<sup>44</sup> Bucer.

<sup>45</sup> Paragraph 23.

<sup>46</sup> Paragraph 24.

<sup>47</sup> Paragraph 25.

<sup>48</sup> Paragraph 26.



one more in conformity with the teaching of the Church, such as is contained in the works of Thomas Aquinas."<sup>49</sup> "For, the teachings of Thomas... have very great and invincible force to overturn those principles of the new order which are well known to be dangerous to the peaceful order of things..."<sup>50</sup>

"We exhort you, venerable brethren, in all earnestness to restore the golden wisdom of St. Thomas, and to spread it far and wide for the defense and beauty of the Catholic faith, for the good of society, and for the advantage of all the sciences.... Let carefully selected teachers endeavor to implant the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas in the minds of students, and set forth clearly his solidarity and excellence over others. Let the universities already founded or to be founded by you illustrate and defend this doctrine, and use it for the refutation of prevailing errors. But, lest the false for the true, or the corrupt for the pure be drunk in, be watchful that the doctrine of Thomas be drawn from his own fountains, or at least from those rivulets which, derived from the very fount, have thus far flowed, according to the established agreement of learned men, pure and clear; be careful to guard the minds of youth from those which are said to flow thence, but in reality are gathered from strange and unwholesome streams."<sup>51</sup>

"Therefore... let us follow the example of the Angelic Doctor, who never gave himself to reading or writing without first begging the blessing of God, who modestly confessed that whatever he knew he had acquired not so much by his own study and labor as by the divine gift."<sup>52</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Paragraph 28.

<sup>50</sup> Paragraph 29.

<sup>51</sup> Paragraph 31.

<sup>52</sup> Paragraph 33.

1879 **Letter *Jampridem***

This Letter proclaims his intention to restore the Roman Academy of St. Thomas and to publish Aquinas' complete works.<sup>53</sup>

1880 **Motu Proprio *Placere Nobis***

In this *motu proprio* he orders a new edition of the complete works of St. Thomas,<sup>54</sup> intending "that the excellent wisdom of the Angelic Doctor flow far and wide. There is nothing more suitable to oppose the perverse notions of our times. There is no more powerful agent for conserving the truth."<sup>55</sup>

1880 **Alloc. *Pergratus Nobis***

Pope Leo XIII proclaims the necessity of studying the philosophy of St. Thomas in this document.<sup>56</sup>

1880 ***Cum hoc sit***

**Apostolic Letter Commemorating the First Anniversary of *Aeterni Patris***

"And those who are doing any work in sacred science so sharply attacked at present, have a source in the volumes of St. Thomas whence they can fully demonstrate the bases of Christian faith, whence they can convince others of supernatural truth, and whence they can repel the vicious attacks of the enemy upon our holy religion."<sup>57</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Maritain, Append. II, page 221.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Maritain, Append. II, page 221.

<sup>55</sup> Motu proprio *Placere nobis*, on the complete edition of the works of St. Thomas Aquinas, Jan. 18, 1880, cf. Berthier, op. cit., 200.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Maritain, Append. II, page 221.

<sup>57</sup> Aug. 4, 1880, op. cit., I, 114.

"His doctrine is so inclusive that he has embraced within himself as in a sea all the wisdom flowing from the ancients. Whatever truth was spoken or discussed by pagan philosophers, by the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, by great men who lived before him, he not only thoroughly investigated but augmented, perfected and disposed with such a clear penetration of ideas, such an accurate system of argumentation, such an economy of speech, that he appears only to have left the power to imitate but not to excel.... He stands invincible, strengthening his arguments by the force of reason, and striking great terror in the minds of his adversaries."<sup>58</sup>

"The holy Doctor clearly proves that truths springing from the natural order cannot contradict those which are believed by faith: consequently, the support and cultivation of the Christian faith is not a mean and servile function of reason, but rather its noble obedience by which the mind is aided educated in a loftier realm of truth. Finally, science and faith both coming from God should not exercise a rivalry of dissension but, bound together by the ties of friendship, should offer help to each other. An outstanding example of this wonderful harmony and concordance is found in all the writings of St. Thomas. In them that harmony shines brilliantly; at one time reason predominates, with faith leading the way in the investigation of nature; at another time faith takes the lead defended and supported by reason, in such a way that each maintains inviolate its proper force and dignity. When a problem so demands, both join together, having made a compact, as it were, to destroy the enemies of each."<sup>59</sup>

On the first anniversary of *Aeterni Patris*, in *Cum hoc sit*,

<sup>58</sup> Brief *Cum hoc sit*, loc. cit., 112.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

he appoints St. Thomas universal patron of Catholic schools<sup>60</sup> and gives Aquinas the title, "Heavenly Patron of the Highest Studies."<sup>61</sup>

1881 *Letter to the Patriarch of Venice*

"The more the clergy is penetrated by the doctrine of St. Thomas, the more it will go forth instructed with stronger bases for a solid faith, and so much the more fruitful and useful will be its ministry to the faithful. Furthermore, those who impede Catholic truth with fallacious arguments will find its defenders better prepared, and supplied with excellent weapons for a strenuous defense."<sup>62</sup>

1881 Encyclical *Licet Multa (On Catholics in Belgium)*

"In what concerns yourselves, Dear Son and Venerable Brethren, use all your vigilance so that all men of science, and those, most especially, to whom you have confided the charge of teaching youth, be of one accord, and unanimous in all those questions upon which the teaching of the Holy See allows no freedom of opinion. And as to points left to the discussion of the learned, may their intellects, owing to your inspiration and your advice, be so exercised upon them that the divergences of opinion destroy not union of heart and concord of will. On this subject the Sovereign Pontiff, Benedict XIV, our immortal predecessor, has left in his Constitution '*Sollicita ac provida*,' certain rules for men of study, full of wisdom and authority. He has even proposed to them, as a model to imitate in this matter, St. Thomas Aquinas, whose moderation of language and maturity of style are maintained as well in the combat against adversaries, as in the exposition of doctrine and the proofs

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Maritain, *Append. II*, page 222.

<sup>61</sup> As quoted by John Paul II in his *Address on the 100th Anniv. of Aet. Pat.*

<sup>62</sup> March 26, 1881, *op. cit.*, 217-218.



destined for its defense. We wish to renew to learned men the recommendations of our predecessor, and to point out to them this noble model, who will teach them not only the manner of carrying on controversy with opponents, but also the character of the doctrine to be held and developed in the cultivation of philosophy and theology. On many occasions, Dear Son and Venerable Brethren, we have expressed to you our earnest desire of seeing the wisdom of St. Thomas reinstated in Catholic schools, and everywhere treated with the highest consideration. We have likewise exhorted you to establish in the University of Louvain the teaching of higher philosophy in the spirit of St. Thomas. In this matter, as in all others, we have found you entirely ready to condescend to our wishes and to fulfill our will. Pursue then, with zeal, the task which has been begun, and watch with care that in this same University the fruitful sources of Christian philosophy, which spring from the works of St. Thomas, be open to students in a rich abundance, and applied to the profit of all other branches of instruction. In the execution of this design, if you have need of our aid or our counsels, they shall never be wanting to you."<sup>63</sup>

1886 *Letter Qui te*

Leo XIII discusses his desire that "the philosophy of St. Thomas may flourish incorrupt and entire in schools, which is very dear to Our heart," and that... "on the *Summa* of St. Thomas Aquinas, so that his readers might not allow the text of the Angelic Doctor to escape from their hands. In this way only and not otherwise will the genuine doctrine of St. Thomas flourish in the schools, which is a goal very close to Our heart. *For the method of teaching which relies upon the authority and judgment of several masters has*

<sup>63</sup> Encyclical, Aug 3, 1881.

*a changeable basis, in that mutually contradictory opinions arise which cannot be reconciled with the mind of St. Thomas. Then, too, such diverse opinions nourish dissension and disagreement which can no longer disturb Catholic schools without great harm to Christian knowledge. We desire teachers of Sacred Theology, imitating the Tridentine Fathers, should wish to have the *Summa* of St. Thomas open on their desks before them, whence they may find counsel, arguments and theological conclusions. From such schools the Church may rightly expect fearless soldiers who can destroy error and defend Catholicism."*<sup>64</sup>

1886 *Letter to Cardinals Simeoni and Zigliara*

[Truly,] "anyone seriously interested in Philosophy and Theology and desirous of attaining some proficiency in those disciplines needs nothing more than a greater familiarity with the *Summa contra Gentiles* and the *Summa Theologiae*."<sup>65</sup>

1891 *Apostolic Letter On the Mexican Hierarchy*

"This point is vital, that Bishops expend every effort to see that young men, destined to be the hope of the Church, should be imbued with the holy and heavenly doctrine of the Angelic Doctor. In those places where young men have devoted themselves to the patronage and doctrine of St. Thomas, true wisdom will flourish, drawn as it is from solid principles, and explained by reason in an orderly fashion!"<sup>66</sup>

1892 *Brief Gravissime Nos*

In this Brief, he invites members of the Society of Jesus to follow the teaching of St. Thomas.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Also quoted by St. Pius X in *Doc. Angel.*; Letter of June 19, 1886, op. cit., 228.

<sup>65</sup> Oct. 2, 1886, op. cit., 230.

<sup>66</sup> June 23, 1891, op. cit., 239.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Maritain, *Append. II*, page 222.

1892 *Letter to Rev. P.J. Berthier*

"We know that the Catholic clergy will be more solidly penetrated by divine science the more fully and thoroughly it is imbued with the doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas."<sup>68</sup>

1893 *Encyclical Providentissimus Deus (On the Study of Sacred Scripture)*

The great contribution of St. Thomas Aquinas and the other Scholastics is discussed by Pope Leo XIII in his Encyclical on Sacred Scripture, as he states emphatically: "To them we owe the accurate and clear distinction, such as had not been given before of the various senses of the sacred words; the assignment of the value of each 'sense' in Theology; the division of books into parts, and the summaries of the various parts.... The valuable work of the scholastics in Holy Scripture is seen in their theological treatises and in their scripture commentaries; and in this respect the greatest name among them all is St. Thomas Aquinas."<sup>69</sup>

In discussing his view that students in academies and schools should be primarily occupied with the learning of dogma from the Articles of Faith and from the proofs contained in Holy Scripture, Leo XIII then declares that "It is this view of doctrinal teaching which is laid down and recommended by the prince of theologians, St. Thomas Aquinas." He goes on to recommend that "The best preparation will be a conscientious application to philosophy and Theology under the guidance of St. Thomas of Aquinas."<sup>70</sup>

1893 *Letter to the quarterly Divus Thomas*

"From the very beginning of Our Pontificate, driven by a knowledge of serious evils, We have often striven that the

<sup>68</sup> Aug. 29, 1892, op. cit., 242.

<sup>69</sup> I.B. 26.

<sup>70</sup> II., C., 2.

studies of Philosophy and Theology should be reintegrated according to the time-honored scholastic system of St. Thomas, and that the discipline of his scholastic method should be established as handmaid and companion to the truth of faith. We now rightly rejoice that this has been accomplished in practically every Catholic School."<sup>71</sup>

1893 *Letter of July 31*

"Theology proceeding correctly and well according to the plan and method of Aquinas in accordance with Our command. Every day We become more clearly aware how powerfully Sacred Doctrine taught by its Master and Patron, Thomas, affords the greatest possible utility for both clergy and laity."<sup>72</sup>

1895 *Apostolic Letter Constitutiones*

Pope Leo XIII approves the new statutes of the Roman Academy of St. Thomas in this Apostolic Letter.<sup>73</sup>

1898 *To the Friars Minor*

He invites the Friars Minor to follow the teaching of St. Thomas.<sup>74</sup>

1899 *Encyclical Depuis le jour*

"The book par excellence whence students can study Scholastic Theology with much profit is the Summa Theologiae of St. Thomas Aquinas.... It is our wish, therefore, that professors be sure to explain to all their pupils its method, as well as the principal articles relating to Catholic faith."<sup>75</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Berthier, op. cit., 259. Cf. also Letter to the quarterly *Divus Thomas*, Feb. 7, 1893, *ibid.*, 253.

<sup>72</sup> Op. cit., 254.

<sup>73</sup> Cited in Maritain, *Append. II*, page 222.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Maritain, *Append. II*, page 222.

<sup>75</sup> On the education of the clergy in France, Sept. 8, 1899, *Acts*, VI, 100.



- 1901 *Letter of Sept. 5*  
 "...as leader and master our remarkable Thomas, who is easily the prince of Sacred Science."<sup>76</sup>
- 1904 St. Pius X  
 Apostolic Letter *In praecipuis* to the Roman Academy of St. Thomas  
 "restored the Angelic Doctor... as the leader and master of Theology, whose divine genius fashioned weapons marvelously suited to protect the truth and destroy the many errors of the times. Indeed, those principles of wisdom useful for all time, which the holy Fathers and Doctors passed on to us, have been organized by no one more aptly than by Thomas, and no one has explained them more clearly."<sup>77</sup>
- 1906 Encyclical *Pieni l'animo*  
 "Studies in Philosophy, Theology and cognate sciences, especially Sacred Scripture, should be made in conformity with the pontifical directives and the study of Saint Thomas, so often recommended by Our revered predecessor and by Us."<sup>78</sup>
- 1906 *Letter to the Bishop of St. Gall*  
 "Theology in the University of Fribourg in Switzerland was being guided by Dominican brethren who, following a true appraisal of science, especially of sacred science, clothe themselves with the security of true teaching, for they have their own brother in Theology, that divine light, Thomas Aquinas, who is not only the prince but also the leader and

- master of sacred schools. This is as Our predecessor Leo XIII ordered and We confirm that order with the certainty of fruitful results."<sup>79</sup>
- 1907 *Pascendi Dominici Gregis (On the Doctrine of the Modernists)*  
 "In the first place, with regard to studies, We will and strictly ordain that scholastic philosophy be made the basis of the sacred sciences... And let it be clearly understood above all things that when We prescribe scholastic philosophy We understand chiefly that which the Angelic Doctor has bequeathed to us, and We, therefore, declare that all the ordinances of Our predecessor on this subject continue fully in force, and, as far as may be necessary, We do decree anew, and confirm, and order that they shall be strictly observed by all... Further, We admonish professors to bear well in mind that they cannot set aside St. Thomas, especially in metaphysical questions, without grave disadvantage."<sup>80</sup>
- 1907 *Letter to Fr. Pegues*  
 "Indeed those who depart from Thomas, especially in Theology, 'seem to effect ultimately their own withdrawal from the Church.'"<sup>81</sup>
- 1908 *Letter to the Professors of the Theological Faculty of Fribourg*  
 "That no one, in any way whatsoever, depart from the regulations of the Church in the matter of teaching. Rejecting modernistic fallacies, let them deal only with the sources

<sup>76</sup> Op. cit., 269.

<sup>77</sup> *In praecipuis* to the Roman Academy of St. Thomas, Jan. 23, 1904, *Acta Pii X*, ed. Bonne Presse, I, 124.

<sup>78</sup> July 28, 1906, ASS, 324.

<sup>79</sup> Feb. 6, 1906, cf. Berthier, op. cit., 274.

<sup>80</sup> Paragraph 45, latter part quoted also in Pius XI's *Stud. Ducem* #16 as "To deviate from Aquinas in metaphysics especially, is to run grave risk," and is later re-stated by St. Pius X in *Doctoris Angelici*.

<sup>81</sup> Nov. 17, 1907, op. cit., 276.

of Sacred Doctrine and well-based Philosophy from the rich vein of the Angelic Doctor."<sup>82</sup>

1910 *Letter Sacrorum Antistitum*

"So far as studies are concerned, it is Our will and We hereby explicitly ordain that the Scholastic philosophy be considered as the basis of sacred studies.... And what is of capital importance in prescribing that Scholastic philosophy is to be followed, We have in mind particularly the philosophy which as been transmitted to us by St. Thomas Aquinas."<sup>83</sup>

"We warn teachers to keep this religiously in mind, that disregarding Aquinas even slightly cannot be done without great harm. A small error in the beginning, to use the words of Aquinas in the prologue to his *De ente et essentia*, becomes very great in the end."<sup>84</sup>

1910 *Letter to Fr. Lottini*

"In this particular matter no safer principle can be employed than to follow Thomas as leader and master. Those who write of divine things according to his mind draw great light and strength from this source."<sup>85</sup>

1913 *Letter to Fr. Cormier*

"We consider of very great value the doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas, with which We especially wish all students to be imbued, in order that they may sweep out depraved ideas of divine and human things, which insinuate themselves everywhere, and being solidly based in Christian truth themselves, they may implant it deeply in the hearts of all."<sup>86</sup>

<sup>82</sup> July 11, 1908, op. cit., 277.

<sup>83</sup> As quoted by St. Pius X in *Doctoris Angelici*.

<sup>84</sup> Sept. 1, 1910, AAS 2, 656-657.

<sup>85</sup> Aug. 8, 1910, AAS 2, 724.

<sup>86</sup> Aug. 4, 1913, op. cit., 280.

1914 *Motu Proprio Praeclara*

"As we have said, one may not desert Aquinas, especially in philosophy and theology, without great harm; following him is the safest way to a knowledge of divine things."<sup>87</sup>

"His golden doctrine lights up the mind with his own brilliance, his path and method lead to the deepest knowledge of divine things, without any danger of error."<sup>88</sup>

"That the privilege of conferring all the academic degrees in philosophy and theology may bear more abundant fruit for the Order and the Church, We desire and command that the Professors of the College of St. Anselm always follow the doctrine of Aquinas in philosophy and theology, and use the text itself in their lectures to the students of Theology who are working for degrees."<sup>89</sup>

1914 *Motu Proprio Doctoris Angelici (The Study of Thomistic Philosophy in Catholic Schools)*

As a clarification to his previous statement concerning the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas in *Sacrorum Antistitum*, St. Pius X states in this motu proprio:

"In recommending St. Thomas to Our subjects as supreme guide in the Scholastic philosophy, it goes without saying that Our intention was to be understood as referring above all to those principles upon which that philosophy is based as its foundation."<sup>90</sup>

"St. Thomas perfected and augmented still further by the almost angelic quality of his intellect all [the] superb patrimony of wisdom which he inherited from his predecessors (the Fathers and doctors of the Church) and applied it to prepare, illustrate and protect sacred doctrine... Sound

<sup>87</sup> June 24, 1914, AAS 6, 335.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 134.

<sup>89</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>90</sup> There are no paragraph numbers for this document, so the citations are simply taken and listed in order as appeared in the document.



reason suggests that it would be foolish to neglect it... the capital theses in the philosophy of St. Thomas are not to be placed in the category of opinions capable of being debated one way or another, but are to be considered as the foundations upon which the whole science of natural and divine things is based; if such principles are once removed or in any way impaired, it must necessarily follow that students of the sacred sciences will ultimately fail to perceive the meaning of the words in which the dogmas of divine revelation are proposed by the magistracy of the Church." "We therefore desired that all teachers of philosophy and sacred Theology should be warned that if they deviated so much as a step, in metaphysics especially, from Aquinas, they exposed themselves to grave risk.... If the doctrine of any writer or Saint has ever been approved by Us or Our Predecessors with such singular commendation... it may easily be understood that it was commended to the extent that it agreed with the principles of Aquinas or was in no way opposed to them."

"...it is of the first importance that the old system of lecturing on the actual text of the *Summa Theologica* — which should never have been allowed to fall into disuse — be revived.... For ever since the happy death of the saintly Doctor, the Church has not held a single Council, but he has been present at it with the wealth of his doctrine."<sup>91</sup>

"...it is Our will and We hereby order and command that teachers of sacred Theology... use the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas as the text of their predilections and comment upon it... and let them take particular care to inspire their pupils with a devotion for it."

"In future, therefore, no power to grant academic degrees in sacred Theology will be given to any institution unless Our prescription is religiously observed therein."

<sup>91</sup> Pius XI quotes this statement in *Stud. Ducem* #11.

"This is Our Order, and nothing shall be suffered to gainstay it."

#### Decree XXIV Thomist Theses: Sacred Congregation of Studies

A month after St. Pius X issued *Doctoris Angelici*, his Sacred Congregation of Studies issued "the principles and main theses of the holy Doctor" to be followed.

#### 1914 Motu Proprio *Non Multo Post*

In this Letter Pius X wrote concerning Aquinas to the Roman Academy of St. Thomas.<sup>92</sup>

"Along with Our predecessors We are equally persuaded that the only philosophy worth our efforts is that which is according to Christ (Coloss. II, 8). Therefore, *the study of philosophy according to the principles and system of Aquinas must certainly be encouraged* so that the explanation and invincible defense of divinely revealed truth may be as full as human reason can make it. And so, We wish this Academy of St. Thomas to be under Our care not less than it was under the care of Our predecessors."<sup>93</sup>

#### 1914 Letter to Humbert Everest

"To publish the immortal works of Aquinas is the same as divulging in writing the most complete human and divine knowledge, and offering to everyone desirous of knowledge the best method of philosophy to unlock sacred truths and effectively to destroy errors."<sup>94</sup>

1914 And so it is only right that we read in the eulogy of Pius X, placed at the foot of his coffin: "he zealously promoted the teaching of Thomas Aquinas."<sup>95</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Cited in Maritain, *Append. II*, page 222.

<sup>93</sup> *Motu proprio Non multo post*, loc. cit., 6-7.

<sup>94</sup> *Letter to Humbert Everest*, O.P. of Feb. 24, 1912, AAS 4, 164-165.

<sup>95</sup> AAS 6, 430.

- 1915 **Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Studies**  
 "The Roman Academy of St. Thomas has this particular purpose to explain, defend and protect the philosophy of the Angelic Doctor. Moreover, teachers, at least once every week during the academic year, should read the works of St. Thomas on philosophy, especially the commentaries on Aristotle and Boethius."<sup>96</sup>
- 1916 **Benedict XV**  
**Letter to Fr. Hugon**  
 "It is a holy and salutary practice, and practically necessary in Catholic schools where young men are acquiring a knowledge of philosophy and theology, to have Thomas Aquinas as the supreme master. Therefore, what has been most wisely determined in this matter by Our predecessors, especially Leo XIII and Pius X of happy memory, is to be retained whole and inviolate at all costs. In addition, we consider it extremely useful if the Angelic Doctor were to step out from the very sanctuary of the school, as it were, and proffer the almost divine light of his brilliance to all who desire to be more deeply learned in their religion. For it is clear that the Modernists, as they are called, have fallen into such a great variety of opinions, all distant from the faith, precisely because they have neglected the principles and teaching of St. Thomas."<sup>97</sup>
- 1916 **Concerning the Dominicans**  
 Benedict XV stated that they "must be praised, not so much for having been the family of the Angelic Doctor, as for having never afterwards departed so much as a hair's breadth from his teaching."<sup>98</sup>

<sup>96</sup> March 12, 1915. AAS 7, 128, 129.

<sup>97</sup> May 5, 1916, AAS 8, 174.

<sup>98</sup> AAS 8, 1916, p. 397; also quoted in Pius XI's *Stud. Ducem* #31.

- Congregation of Seminaries and Universities**  
 Answers given on the XXIV theses.<sup>99</sup>
- 1916 **Decree**  
 "The purpose of this Academy is to explain, protect and spread the doctrine of the Angelic Doctor especially in philosophy, and follow strictly what was set down in the Encyclical *Aeterni Patris*. The chief works of the Academy are these: to join their studies and forces with the other academies of the same Institute so as to establish Christian philosophy everywhere according to the principles of Aquinas."<sup>100</sup>
- 1916 **Letter to Fr. Theissling**  
 "Who is there devoted to serious study, with love for Holy Church joined to zeal for learning, who does not most faithfully cherish Thomas Aquinas, whose doctrine by the gift of divine providence furnishes so dependable a light for the Church to strengthen the truth and destroy error forever? To the credit of the Order of Preachers we must add this praise, not so much that it nourished the Angelic Doctor, but that never after, even in the slightest degree, has it deviated from his doctrine."<sup>101</sup>
- 1917 **Code of Canon Law**  
 Pope Benedict XV promulgated the Code of Canon Law and within it St. Thomas Aquinas was declared master: "Teachers shall deal with the studies of mental philosophy and Theology and the education of their pupils in such sciences according to the method (system or manner),

<sup>99</sup> Cited in Maritain, *Append. II*, page 222.

<sup>100</sup> Decree of the same Congregation approved by Benedict XV on Feb. 11, 1916 AAS 8, 364.

<sup>101</sup> *Letter to Fr. Theissling*, Oct. 29, 1916, AAS 8, 397.



doctrine (philosophy) and principles of the Angelic Doctor and religiously adhere thereto."<sup>102</sup>

1918 *Letter of Nov. 17*

"We know as well as Our wise predecessors how to be zealous for the glory of Aquinas and We desire that this great Doctor, as he is the more viciously assailed by the heretics of our times, should on that account be more conscientiously regarded as leader and master by students for the Church in the study of philosophy and in sacred studies."<sup>103</sup>

1919 *Letter to Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange*

"That Aquinas has a phenomenal power for clarifying and defending Christian wisdom, is clear from your recent book *De Revelatione*. In your explanation of that part of fundamental theology called Apologetics you use the doctrine and method of St. Thomas in such a way that you singularly overcome not only the ancient but even the recent adversaries of the Christian faith."<sup>104</sup>

1919 *Letter To Fr. Pegues*

On the appearance of his French edition of the *Summa* in the form of a catechism. Using this occasion the Pontiff declared that Thomas is the Master and the Doctor of the whole Church, i.e., of all the faithful, clergy, laity, the wise and the unlearned, and of all time.

"The eminent commendations of Thomas Aquinas by the Holy See no longer permit a Catholic to doubt that he was divinely raised up that the Church might have a master whose doctrine should be followed in a special way at all

<sup>102</sup> Pope Pius XI, in his Encyclical *Studiorum Ducem* quotes this canon, 1366 sec. 2, twice (11, 30), and Pius XII quotes it in *Humani generis*, cf. Denz. 2322.

<sup>103</sup> Letter of Nov. 17, 1918, AAS 10, 480.

<sup>104</sup> Letter of Feb. 14, 1919, AAS 11, 121.

times. The singular wisdom of the man seems suitable to be offered directly not only to the clergy but to all who wish to extend their study of religion, and to the people generally as well. For nature brings it about that the more clearly a person approaches to the light, the more fully is he illuminated."<sup>105</sup>

1921 *Encyclical Fausto appetente die*

Indeed, he is the one "whom, as a son of Dominic, God considered worthy to illumine His Church";<sup>106</sup> "The Church declared that the doctrine of Thomas is its own."<sup>107</sup>

1922 *Pius XI**Officiorum omnium*

In his Apostolic Letter on the education of the clergy Pope Pius XI confirms St. Thomas Aquinas as their guide.<sup>108</sup> Pius XI calls Aquinas, "the Angel of our Schools."<sup>109</sup>

1923 *Encyclical Studiorum Ducem*

On the sixth centenary of the canonization of St. Thomas. "Such a combination of doctrine and piety, of erudition and virtue, of truth, and charity, is to be found in an eminent degree in the angelic Doctor... for he both brings the light of learning into the minds of men and fires their hearts and wills with the virtues."<sup>110</sup>

"Thomas possessed all the moral virtues to a very high degree... his sanctity... chastity... aversion for fleeting pos-

<sup>105</sup> Letter of Feb. 9, 1919, AAS II, 71.

<sup>106</sup> June 29, 1921, AAS 13, 334.

<sup>107</sup> Encyclical *Fausto appetente die*, loc. cit., 332.

<sup>108</sup> Cited in Maritain, Append. II, page 223.

<sup>109</sup> *Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio* (On the Peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ), 23 December 1922.

<sup>110</sup> Paragraph 2.

sessions and a contempt for honours... two forms of wisdom, the acquired and the infused... humility, devotion to prayer, and the love of God."<sup>111</sup>

"This humility, therefore, combined with the purity of heart We have mentioned, and sedulous devotion to prayer, disposed the mind of Thomas to docility in receiving the inspirations of the Holy Ghost and following His illuminations, which are the first principles of contemplation. To obtain them from above, he would frequently fast, spend whole nights in prayer, lean his head in the fervour of his unaffected piety against the tabernacle containing the august Sacrament, constantly turn his eyes and mind in sorrow to the image of the crucified Jesus, and he confessed to his intimate friend St. Bonaventura that it was from that Book especially that he derived all his learning. It may, therefore, be truly said of Thomas what is commonly reported of St. Dominic, Father and Lawgiver, that in his conversation he never spoke but about God or with God."<sup>112</sup>

"This wisdom, therefore, which comes down from, or is infused by, God, accompanied by the other gifts of the Holy Ghost, continually grew and increased in Thomas, along with charity, the mistress and queen of all the virtues... so the love of God, continually increasing in Thomas along with that double wisdom induced in him in the end such absolute forgetfulness of self that when Jesus spoke to him from the cross, saying: 'Thomas, thou hast written well about me,' and asked him: 'What reward shall be given thee for all thy labour?' the saint made answer: 'None but thyself, O Lord!' Instinct with charity, therefore, he unceasingly continued to serve the convenience of others, not counting the cost, by writing admirable

<sup>111</sup> Paragraph 4.

<sup>112</sup> Paragraph 6.

books, helping his brethren in their labours, depriving himself of his own garments to give them to the poor, even restoring the sick to health as, for example, when preaching in the Vatican Basilica on the occasion of the Easter celebrations, he suddenly cured a woman who had touched the hem of his habit of a chronic hemorrhage."<sup>113</sup>

"In what other Doctor was this 'word of wisdom' mentioned by St. Paul more remarkable and abundant than in the Angelic Doctor? He was not satisfied with enlightening the minds of men by his teaching: he exerted himself strenuously to rouse their hearts... Nothing, however, shows the force of his genius and charity so clearly as the Office which he himself composed for the august Sacrament."<sup>114</sup>

"...it is easy to understand the pre-eminence of his doctrine and the marvelous authority it enjoys in the Church."<sup>115</sup>

"We so heartily approve the magnificent tribute of praise bestowed upon this most divine genius that We consider that Thomas should be called not only the Angelic, but also the Common or Universal Doctor of the Church; for the Church has adopted his philosophy for her own, as innumerable documents of every kind attest... that Thomas wrote under the inspiration of the supernatural spirit which animated his life and that his writings, which contain the principles of, and the laws governing, all sacred studies, must be said to possess a universal character."<sup>116</sup>

"In dealing orally or in writing with divine things, he provides theologians with a striking example of the intimate connection which should exist between the spiritual and

<sup>113</sup> Paragraph 8.

<sup>114</sup> Paragraph 9.

<sup>115</sup> Paragraph 10.

<sup>116</sup> Paragraph 11.



the intellectual life... The aim of the whole Theology of St. Thomas is to bring us into close living intimacy with God."<sup>117</sup>

"Sacred Studies, therefore, being directed by a triple light, undeviating reason, infused faith and the gifts of the Holy Ghost, by which the mind is brought to perfection, no one ever was more generously endowed with these than Our Saint... God was wont to listen to His suppliant so kindly that He dispatched the Princes of the Apostles at times to instruct him... For, according to Thomas, by far the most important benefit to be derived from sacred studies, is that they inspire a man with a great love for God and a great longing for eternal things."<sup>118</sup>

"His teaching with regard to the power or value of the human mind is irrefragable."<sup>119</sup>

"The arguments adduced by St. Thomas to prove the existence of God and that God alone is subsisting Being Itself are still today, as they were in the Middle Ages, the most cogent of all arguments... The metaphysical philosophy of St. Thomas... still retains, like gold which no acid can dissolve, its full force and splendor unimpaired."<sup>120</sup>

"There can be no doubt that Aquinas raised Theology to the highest eminence, for his knowledge of divine things was absolutely perfect... Thomas is therefore considered the Prince of teachers in our schools... because of his theological studies. There is no branch of theology in which he did not exercise the incredible fecundity of his genius."<sup>121</sup>

<sup>117</sup> Paragraph 12.

<sup>118</sup> Paragraph 13.

<sup>119</sup> Paragraph 15.

<sup>120</sup> Paragraph 16.

<sup>121</sup> Paragraph 17.

#### **Fundamental Theology:**

"For in the first place he established apologetics on a sound and genuine basis by defining exactly the difference between the province of reason and the province of faith and carefully distinguishing the natural and the supernatural orders."<sup>122</sup>

#### **Dogmatic Theology:**

"The other branch of Theology, which is concerned with the interpretation of dogmas, also found in St. Thomas by far the richest of all commentators, for nobody ever more profoundly penetrated or expounded with greater subtlety all the august mysteries."<sup>123</sup>

#### **Moral Theology:**

"He also composed a substantial moral theology, capable of directing all human acts in accordance with the supernatural last end of man. And as he is, as We have said, the perfect theologian, so he gives infallible rules and precepts of life not only for individuals, but also for civil and domestic society... It is therefore to be wished that the teachings of Aquinas... become more and more studied."<sup>124</sup>

#### **Spiritual Theology:**

"His eminence in the learning of asceticism and mysticism is no less remarkable; for he brought the whole science of morals back to the theory of the virtues and gifts... If anyone, therefore, desires to understand fully all the implications... of ascetical and mystical theology, he must have recourse in the first place to the Angelic Doctor."<sup>125</sup>

<sup>122</sup> Paragraph 18.

<sup>123</sup> Paragraph 19.

<sup>124</sup> Paragraph 20.

<sup>125</sup> Paragraph 21.

**Biblical Theology:**

"Everything he wrote was securely based upon Holy Scripture and that was the foundation upon which he built. For he was convinced that Scripture was entirely and in every particular the true word of God... he established the fecundity and riches of the spiritual sense."<sup>126</sup>

**Sacramental Theology:**

"Lastly, our Doctor possessed the exceptional and highly privileged gift of being able to convert his precepts into liturgical prayers and hymns and so became the poet and panegyrist of the Divine Eucharist... They are... a perfect statement of the doctrine of the august Sacrament transmitted by the Apostles... St. Thomas should also have received the title of the Doctor of the Eucharist."<sup>127</sup>

"Let Our young men especially consider the example of St. Thomas and strive diligently to imitate the eminent virtues which adorn his character, his humility above all, which is the foundation of the spiritual life, and his chastity. Let them learn... to abhor all pride of mind and to obtain by humble prayer a flood of divine light upon their studies.... If the purity of Thomas therefore had failed in the extreme peril into which, as we have seen, it had fallen it is very probable that the Church would never have had her Angelic Doctor."<sup>128</sup>

"But inasmuch as St. Thomas has been duly proclaimed patron of all Catholic Schools... let him be a model also for seminarians.... Let all the Faithful of Christ take the Angelic Doctor as a model of devotion to the august Queen of Heaven, for it was his custom often to repeat the 'Hail Mary' and to inscribe the sweet Name upon his pages, and let them ask the Doctor of the Eucharist himself to inspire

them with love for the divine Sacrament. Priests above all will be zealous in so doing, as is only proper."<sup>129</sup>

"Again, if we avoid the errors which are the source and fountain-head of all the miseries of our time, the teaching of Aquinas must be adhered to more religiously than ever."<sup>130</sup>

"... We now say to all such as are desirous of the truth: 'Go to Thomas', and ask him to give you from his ample store the food of substantial doctrine wherewith to nourish your souls unto eternal life."<sup>131</sup>

"We desire those especially who are engaged in teaching the higher studies in seminaries sedulously to observe and inviolably to maintain the decrees of Our Predecessors.... Let them be persuaded that they will discharge their duty and fulfill Our expectation when, after long and diligent perusal of his writings, they begin to feel an intense devotion for the Doctor Aquinas and by their exposition of him succeed in inspiring their pupils with like fervour and train them to kindle a similar zeal in others."<sup>132</sup>

"Let everyone therefore inviolably observe the prescription contained in the Code of Canon Law (1366, sec. 2)... and may they conform to this rule so faithfully as to be able to describe him in very truth as their master."<sup>133</sup>

"...in honouring St. Thomas something greater is involved than the reputation of St. Thomas and that is the authority of the teaching Church."<sup>134</sup>

"Finally, that the studies to which Our young people devote themselves may, under the patronage of Aquinas, daily

<sup>129</sup> Paragraph 26.

<sup>130</sup> Paragraph 27.

<sup>131</sup> Paragraph 28.

<sup>132</sup> Paragraph 29; cited also in Denz. 2191.

<sup>133</sup> Paragraph 30; cited also in Denz. 2192.

<sup>134</sup> Paragraph 31.

<sup>126</sup> Paragraph 22.

<sup>127</sup> Paragraph 23.

<sup>128</sup> Paragraph 24.



yield more and more fruit for the glory of God and the Church."<sup>135</sup>

1923 *Allocution to the Cardinals*

"...so to speak, a certain natural Gospel, an incomparably solid foundation for all scientific construction, since the chief characteristic of Thomism is its objectivity: its constructions or elevations are not those of a mind cut off from reality, but there are constructions of a spirit which follows the real nature of things.... The value of Thomistic doctrine will never seem less because this would require that the value of things become less."<sup>136</sup>

1924 *Apostolic Letter Unigenitus Dei Filius*

"Let that, indeed, be inviolable for you which We published in agreement with Canon Law in Our Apostolic Letter on Seminaries and Clerical Studies, namely, that teachers, in teaching the principles of philosophy and theology, faithfully adhere to the scholastic method according to the principles and doctrines of Aquinas. Is anyone unaware how wonderfully suitable the scholastic discipline and angelic wisdom of Thomas is, which Our predecessors continually embellished with the most fulsome praise, for the purpose of explaining divine truths and refuting the errors of every age? The Angelic Doctor, so states Leo XIII, Our predecessor of immortal memory, in the encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, rich in divine and human knowledge, comparable to the sun, is responsible for the fact that he alone vanquished every error then in existence and supplied us with invincible weapons for destroying late errors which would continually arise."<sup>137</sup>

<sup>135</sup> Paragraph 34.

<sup>136</sup> Dec. 20, 1923, Loc. cit., cf. note 16.

<sup>137</sup> Apostolic Letter *Unigenitus Dei Filius* to the supreme moderators of Religious Orders and of other Societies of religious men, March 19, 1924, AAS 16, 144.

1924 *Letter to Cardinal Mercier*

"By your explanation you protect the metaphysical principles of St. Thomas. To recede from them, even slightly, will cause great harm, as Our predecessor of happy memory, Pius X, warned."<sup>138</sup>

1925 *Allocution to the Professors and Students of the Angelicum College*

"St. Thomas is the bard of the Eucharist and its Doctor: *Cantor et Doctor Eucharisticus*; a poet sweet, sublime, luminous even when he employs neither verse nor meter. When he treats of the Divine Eucharist he carries us to the center which was his center, to the secret which was his secret, to the source of his purity, to the celestial food which was his angelic nourishment."<sup>139</sup>

"All these things are especially resplendent in his *Summa Theologiae* which 'is heaven seen from earth.'"<sup>140</sup>

"Doctor of the whole Church, of every science, of all knowable things; a characteristic which approaches divine power. In few intellects has the participation of the divine intellect sparkled so brilliantly, for which reason we ask ourselves if the Eternal Creator ever left a deeper imprint upon other minds. In his teaching is found par excellence one of the characteristics of the book of life. In all circumstances of life, for all problems which can arise that book has a word and a solution to proffer us. Such is the character of the Holy Gospel because it is the word of God. Something of this divine characteristic is in St. Thomas in his classical works: the *Summa Philosophica* and the *Summa Theologica*. In these books, well read and carefully consulted, there is a word and a solution for all the questions

<sup>138</sup> March 26, AAS 16, 225.

<sup>139</sup> *Allocution to the professors and students of the Angelicum College*, Nov. 12, 1924, cf. *Xenia Thomistica*, III, 600-601, Rome, 1925.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 600.

that can be presented to us: a sure word and a word of genius; they are two books which summarize the entire universe, heaven and earth. *The Summa Theologica* is heaven seen from earth, and the *Summa contra Gentiles* is earth seen from heaven.... It is for this reason that St. Thomas merited the name of Common Doctor."

"Let him, therefore, always be your light; let his books be your constant advisers; from his books always attain truth: if studied wisely and tirelessly, they will furnish the reply to all your questions with immense benefit for life."<sup>141</sup>

1931 ***Deus Scientiarum Dominus***

Teachers of Catholic schools are to impart to their students "the full and coherent synthesis of philosophy according to the method and the principles of St. Thomas Aquinas; in the light of this teaching, furthermore, the different systems of the other philosophers are to be examined and judged."

"Sacred theology holds the chief place in a Theological Faculty. This study must be pursued by both a positive and a scholastic method. Therefore, when the truths of faith are explained and demonstrated from Scripture and tradition, their nature and close relation to the principles and doctrines of St. Thomas is to be investigated and clarified."<sup>142</sup>

1939 **Pius XII**

"It is that wisdom of Aquinas which collected the truths of human reason, illustrated them with brilliance, and most aptly and solidly unified them into a wonderful whole. It is the wisdom of Aquinas which is especially suited to declare and defend the dogmas of the faith. And finally it is his wisdom which was able to refute effectively the basic

errors continually arising, and conquer them invincibly. Wherefore, dear sons, bring to St. Thomas a heart full of love and zeal. With all your powers strive to explore with your intellect his excellent doctrine. Freely embrace whatever clearly pertains to it and is supported by a solid reason found in it."<sup>143</sup>

1942 ***Letter to Fr. Gillet***

"Aquinas, the Angelic and Common Doctor, like the sea receiving unto himself the rivers of wisdom from all who lived before his time, and whatever human reason had attained by thought and mental labor, so composed and ordered all of it in a wonderful manner and with brilliant clearness after exposing it to the supernal light emanating from the Gospel, that he seems to have left to his successors the power to imitate but to have taken away the power to surpass. The doctrine of Thomas not only was most apt for destroying ancient heresies, and for that reason stands forth as the champion of faith and firm bulwark of religion, but also offers the most powerful weapon for destroying thoroughly errors which are being reborn in perpetual succession and which wear the garb of newness.

"Therefore, all who attend Catholic schools of any type should cherish, revere and imitate Thomas Aquinas as a heavenly patron, those especially who study him in philosophy and theology, and specifically students divinely called to the priesthood and growing into the hope of the Church, ought to follow Thomas as leader and master, recalling that there is an innate excellence in Thomistic doctrine and a singular force and power to cure the evils which afflict our age."<sup>144</sup>

<sup>141</sup> Op. cit., 599-600.

<sup>142</sup> May 24, 1931, AAS 23, 253.

<sup>143</sup> June 24, 1939, AAS 31, 246.

<sup>144</sup> March 7, 1942, AAS 34, 97.



- 1943 Encyclical *Mystici Corporis (On the Mystical Body of Christ)*  
 "You are familiar, Venerable Brethren, with the admirable and luminous language used by the masters of Scholastic Theology and chiefly by the Angelic and Common Doctor... and you know that reasons advanced by Aquinas are a faithful reflection of the mind and writings of the Holy Fathers, who moreover merely repeated and commented on the inspired word of Sacred Scripture."<sup>145</sup>
- 1943 Encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu (Inspired by the Divine Spirit)*  
 "As in our age, indeed new questions and new difficulties are multiplied, so, by God's favor, new means and aids to exegesis are also provided. Among these it is worthy of special mention that Catholic theologians, following the teaching of the Holy Father and especially of the Angelic and Common Doctor, have examined and explained the nature and effects of biblical inspiration more exactly and more fully than was wont to be done in previous ages."<sup>146</sup>
- 1946 Encyclical *Humani generis*  
 "If these matters are thoroughly examined, it will be evident why the Church demands that future priests be instructed in the philosophic disciplines 'according to the manner, doctrine and principles of the Angelic Doctor,'<sup>147</sup> since it knows well from the experience of many ages that the method and system of Aquinas, whether in training beginners or investigating hidden truth, stand out with special prominence; moreover, that his doctrine is in harmony, as in a kind of symphony, with divine 'revelation', and is most efficacious in laying safe foundations of faith,

<sup>145</sup> Paragraph 35.

<sup>146</sup> Paragraph 33.

- and also in collecting usefully and securely the fruits of sound progress."<sup>148</sup>
- 1946 *Allocution to the Jesuit General Congregation*  
 He admonished the members of the Society of Jesus "to observe with all diligence their laws which command them to follow the doctrine of St. Thomas as being more solid, safe, approved and constant with their Constitutions."<sup>149</sup>
- Allocution to the Dominican General Chapter*  
 "...the Angelic Doctor is always a most skilled leader and is a never-failing light whose accomplishments will always remain fresh."<sup>150</sup>  
 "These things have the force of law, which bind all Catholic schools of philosophy and theology."<sup>151</sup>
- 1949 *Allocution to the Congress on Humanistic Studies*  
 "Humanism is now the order of the day. Undoubtedly is not an easy task to extract and recognize a clear idea of its nature in the course of its historical evolution. Nevertheless — although humanism has for long had the pretension of being formally opposed to the Middle Ages which preceded it — it is none the less certain that everything it contains of truth, of goodness, of the great and the eternal, belongs to the spiritual universe of the greatest genius of the Middle Ages, Saint Thomas Aquinas."<sup>152</sup>

<sup>147</sup> CIC; can. 1366,2.

<sup>148</sup> Denz. 2322 citing AAS 38, 1946, 387.

<sup>149</sup> *Allocution to the Jesuit General Congregation*, Sept. 17, 1946, AAS 38, 380.

<sup>150</sup> *Allocution to the Dominican General Chapter*, Sept. 22, 1946. AAS 38, 387-383.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> *Allocution to the Congress on Humanistic Studies*, Rome, Sept. 25, 1949. AAS 41, 555.

1950 *Third International Thomistic Congress in Rome*

"This represents a safe path for you who are engaged in discussion and publication; follow the doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas, which lights up the road like a brilliant ray of sun."<sup>153</sup>

"Heaven is distant from the earth in the same degree that the truths of divine revelation exceed the powers of the human mind. They are loftier than those powers of mind but not in the least contradictory or repugnant to them. They are above reason but not opposed to it. With infectious eagerness St. Thomas leads human intelligence, hesitating and dubious by reason of brilliant splendor, into the very temple of the mysteries of God. Producing the solution to the problems by the artistry of his arguments, he brings out the clear and splendid harmony existing between divine and human things. Always follow that inspiration by which the Angelic Doctor learned the truth, namely, by the greater effort of intelligence and by religious piety. Treat these matters thoroughly, insisting upon his method, by which he always defined the limits and content of his opinions, with no useless flow of words but with serious and solid discourse."<sup>154</sup>

1950 *Dominican Missal*

"In the Preface for the Mass of St. Thomas, which the Holy Father himself wrote, he gives thanks to God and addresses Him in these words: "Who wished to raise up in Thy Church the blessed Doctor Thomas, truly Angelic by reason of his pure life and sublime mind; that he might communicate his solid and salutary doctrine and illuminate the Church like the sun; whose wisdom, especially commended to all, is admired by the whole world."<sup>155</sup>

<sup>153</sup> Sept. 17, 1950, AAS 42, 734.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 735.

<sup>155</sup> *Dominican Missal*, Preface of the Mass of St. Thomas.

1960 Pope John XXIII  
*Allocution of Sept 18*

In preparing for the Second Vatican Council, John XXIII established the importance of St. Thomas Aquinas in considering the conciliar objectives: "But if all these things we desire so ardently are to come about the first thing necessary is to study the works of St. Thomas Aquinas carefully. And so we are very interested in seeing a steady growth in the number of people who find enlightenment and learning in the works of the Angelic Doctor."<sup>156</sup>

Pope John XXIII raised the Angelicum in Rome to the rank of a Pontifical University.

1965 Vatican II  
*Optatum Totius (Decree on the Training of Priests)*

"In order to throw as full a light as possible on the mysteries of salvation the student should learn to examine more deeply with the help of speculation and with St. Thomas as teacher all aspects of these mysteries."<sup>157</sup>

*Gravissimum Educationis (Declaration on Christian Education)*

"The Church likewise devotes considerable care to higher level education especially in universities and faculties. Indeed, in institutions under its control the Church endeavors systematically to ensure that the treatment of the individual disciplines is consonant with their own principles, their own methods and with a true liberty of scientific inquiry. Its object is that a progressively deeper understanding of them may be achieved, and by a careful attention to the current problems of these changing times and to the research being undertaken the convergence of faith and reason in one truth may be seen more clearly. This method

<sup>156</sup> Given September 18, 1960.

<sup>157</sup> Paragraph 16.



follows the tradition of the Doctors of the Church and especially St. Thomas Aquinas."<sup>158</sup>

Pope John Paul II commented on these two citations from Vatican II in 1979 when he commemorated the 100th Anniversary of Leo XIII's *Aeterni Patris*: "The words of the Council are clear: 'the Fathers saw that it is fundamental for the adequate formation of the clergy and of Christian youth that it preserve a close link with the cultural heritage of the past, and in particular with the thought of St. Thomas; and that this, in the long run is a necessary condition for the longed-for renewal of the Church.'"<sup>159</sup>

1974 Paul VI  
Apostolic Letter *Lumen Ecclesiae*

In this Letter, Pope Paul VI calls Thomas "Doctor Communis Ecclesiae."

"Without doubt, Thomas possessed supremely the courage of the truth, a freedom of spirit in confronting new problems, the intellectual honesty of those who allow Christianity to be contaminated neither by secular philosophy nor by a prejudiced rejection of it. He passed therefore into the history of Christian thought as a pioneer of the new path of philosophy and universal culture."<sup>160</sup>

"The key point and almost the kernel of the solution which, with all the brilliance of his prophetic intuition, he gave to the new encounter of faith and reason was a reconciliation between the secularity of the world and the radicality of the Gospel, thus avoiding the unnatural tendency to negate the world and its values while at the same time keeping faith with the supreme and inexorable demands of the supernatural order."<sup>161</sup>

<sup>158</sup> Paragraph 10.

<sup>159</sup> Paragraph 15.

<sup>160</sup> Paragraph 8; also quoted by John Paul II in *Fides et Ratio* #43.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

Paul VI also calls Aquinas an "apostle of truth."<sup>162</sup>

"In accomplishing the work signaling the culmination of medieval Christian thought, St. Thomas was not alone. Before and after him many other illustrious doctors worked toward the same good... But without a doubt St. Thomas, as willed by divine Providence, reached the height of all 'scholastic' theology and philosophy, as it is usually called, and set the central pivot in the Church around which, at that time and since, Christian thought could be developed with sure progress."<sup>163</sup>

1979 John Paul II  
*Perennial Philosophy of St. Thomas for the Youth of Our Times*

Soon after becoming pope, John Paul II, who had been a student of St. Thomas at the Angelicum from 1946-1948, gave an address at the conclusion of an international congress commemorating the hundredth anniversary of the publication of Pope Leo XIII's Encyclical *Aeterni Patris*. Some excerpts from his address are as follows:

He calls the Angelicum a "celebrated Roman center of Thomistic studies where one can say that Aquinas lives 'as in his own home'."<sup>164</sup>

Pope John Paul II outlined three extraordinary qualities found in St. Thomas:

- (1) "...his complete submission of mind and heart to divine revelation;"
- (2) "...his excellence as a teacher;"
- (3) "...his sincere, total and lifelong acceptance of the teaching office of the Church... His writings make it clear that this reverential assent was not confined only

<sup>162</sup> Paragraph 8; also quoted by John Paul II in *Fides et Ratio* #44.

<sup>163</sup> Paragraph 13; also quoted by John Paul II in his *Address to the 80th Internat. Thom. Cong.* (1980), #2.

<sup>164</sup> Paragraph 1.

to the solemn and infallible teaching of the Councils and of the Supreme Pontiffs."<sup>165</sup>

About these qualities of St. Thomas, Pope John Paul II adds: "These three qualities mark the entire speculative effort of St. Thomas and make sure that its results are orthodox."<sup>166</sup>

"The philosophy of St. Thomas deserves to be attentively studied and accepted with conviction by the youth of our day by reason of its spirit of openness and of universalism, characteristics which are hard to find in many trends of contemporary thought."<sup>167</sup>

"Not even theology, then, can abandon the philosophy of St. Thomas."<sup>168</sup>

"...other trends in philosophy... can and indeed should be treated as natural allies of the philosophy of St. Thomas."<sup>169</sup>

"There is still one more reason why the philosophy of St. Thomas has enduring value: its prevailing characteristic is that it is always in search of the truth.... The reason why the philosophy of St. Thomas is pre-eminent is to be found in its realism and objectivity: it is a philosophy of what is, not of what appears", and John Paul II goes on to call the philosophy of St. Thomas the "handmaid of faith" (*ancilla fidei*).<sup>170</sup>

Concerning Leo XIII's admonition: "Let us follow the example of the 'Angelic Doctor,'"<sup>171</sup> Pope John Paul II declares: "That is what I also repeat this evening. This advice is indeed fully justified by the witness which he gave by his manner of living and which gave force to what he said

<sup>165</sup> Paragraph 14.

<sup>166</sup> Paragraph 15.

<sup>167</sup> Paragraph 6.

<sup>168</sup> Paragraph 6.

<sup>169</sup> Paragraph 7.

<sup>170</sup> Paragraph 8.

<sup>171</sup> *Aeterni Patris* #33.

as a teacher. He had indeed the technical mastery befitting a teacher, but, prior to this, his manner of teaching was that of a saint who lives the Gospel fully, of one for whom love is everything."<sup>172</sup>

"If we look for the driving force behind his commitment to a life of study, the secret urge which led him to consecrate himself through a total dedication, we find it in... a heart full of the love of God and of his neighbor... allow[ing] us to perceive, behind the thinker able to rise to the loftiest heights of speculation, the mystic accustomed to going straight to the very foundation of all truth to find the answer to the deepest questionings of the human spirit."<sup>173</sup>

"One who approaches St. Thomas cannot set aside this witness which comes from his life; he must rather follow courageously the path traced out by him and bind himself to follow his example if he would wish to taste the most secret and savory fruits of his teachings. This is the burden of the prayer which the liturgy places on our lips on his feastday and 'O God, since it was by Your gift that St. Thomas became so great a saint and theologian, give us the grace to understand his teaching and follow his way of life.'"<sup>174</sup>

1980 *The Method and Doctrine of St. Thomas in Dialogue with Modern Culture:*

Address to the Eighth International Thomistic Congress at the Conclusion of the Centenary Year of *Aeterni Patris*.

"The Church has given preference to the method and doctrine of the Angelic Doctor... not only for the completeness, balance, depth, and clarity of his style, but still more for his keen sense of fidelity to the truth, which can also

<sup>172</sup> Paragraph 10.

<sup>173</sup> Paragraph 10.

<sup>174</sup> Paragraph 10.



be called realism. Fidelity to the voice of created things so as to construct the edifice of philosophy: fidelity to the voice of the Church so as to construct the edifice of theology."<sup>175</sup>

"St. Thomas can be considered the true pioneer of modern scientific realism."<sup>176</sup>

"St. Thomas has always given respectful attention to all authors."<sup>177</sup>

"Furthermore, the basis of his attitude, sympathetic toward everyone, but without failing to be openly critical every time he felt he had to — and he did it courageously in many cases — is in the very concept of truth."<sup>178</sup>

"St. Thomas [is] not only the *Doctor Communis Ecclesiae*, as Paul VI calls him in his beautiful letter *Lumen ecclesiae*, but the *Doctor Humanitatis*, because he is always ready and available to receive the human values of all cultures.... St. Thomas put all the strength of his genius at the exclusive service of the truth, behind which he seems to want to disappear almost for fear of disturbing its brightness so that truth and not he may shine in all its brilliance."<sup>179</sup>

"The authority of St. Thomas' doctrine is here resolved and replenished in the authority of the Church's Doctrine. That is why the Church has proposed it as an exemplary model of theological research."<sup>180</sup>

"The Magisterium of the Church [chooses] St. Thomas as a sure guide in theological and philosophical disciplines."<sup>181</sup>

"The idea of St. Thomas as a cold intellectual, advanced by some, is disproved by the fact that the Angelic One

<sup>175</sup> Paragraph 2.

<sup>176</sup> Paragraph 3.

<sup>177</sup> Paragraph 3.

<sup>178</sup> Paragraph 3.

<sup>179</sup> Paragraph 3.

<sup>180</sup> Paragraph 4.

<sup>181</sup> Paragraph 4.

reduces knowledge itself to love of truth."<sup>182</sup>

"I urge you to continue, with great commitment and seriousness, to accomplish the goals of your Academy so that it can be a living, pulsing, modern center in which the method and doctrine of St. Thomas can be put into continuous contact and serene dialogue with the complex leavens of contemporary culture in which we live and are immersed."<sup>183</sup>

1980 **John Paul II's Congregation for Catholic Education: *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* (Spiritual Formation in Seminaries)**

"Dogmatic Theology should be presented in full and systematically. It should begin with an exposition of its biblical sources, followed by an explanation of the contribution which the Oriental and Latin Fathers have made to the formulation and handing down of the truths of revelation, and how dogma has developed through historical progression. Finally, there should be a full, speculative study, based on St. Thomas of the mysteries of salvation and their interrelation."<sup>184</sup>

"Tradition and Sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of God's word and this is committed to the Church's care. Consequently students should have a lively appreciation for this Tradition as it is found in the works of the Fathers, and should pay special attention to the doctrine of the Fathers and the other Doctors who are renowned in the Church. They should regard St. Thomas as one of the Church's greatest teachers while still esteeming authors of more recent times."<sup>185</sup>

<sup>182</sup> Paragraph 4.

<sup>183</sup> Paragraph 7.

<sup>184</sup> Paragraph 79.

<sup>185</sup> Paragraph 86.

- 1981 Encyclical *Laborem Exercens*, 90th Anniv. of *Rerum Novarum* (On Human Work)  
 "In the course of the decades since the publication of the Encyclical *Rerum novarum*, the Church's teaching has always recalled all these principles, going back to the arguments formulated in a much older tradition, for example, the well-known arguments of the *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas."<sup>186</sup>
- 1983 *Code of Canon Law*, Chapter on the Formation of Clerics  
 "Theological training is to be... imparted in the light of the faith and under the guidance of the magisterium.... There are to be classes in dogmatic theology which are always to be based upon the written word of God along with sacred tradition, in which the students may learn to penetrate ever more profoundly the mysteries of salvation, with St. Thomas as their teacher in a special way."<sup>187</sup>
- 1988 Pope John Paul II's Head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Cardinal Ratzinger (Benedict XVI)  
 Cardinal Ratzinger spoke in his 1988 Erasmus Conference lecture entitled, "Biblical Interpretation in Crisis," where he challenged the so-called modern Thomists to re-evaluate their source as follows:  
 "Take a look at later times: whole generations of Thomistic scholars have not been able to take in the greatness of his (St. Thomas') thought."<sup>188</sup>

<sup>186</sup> Paragraph 22.

<sup>187</sup> *Canon* 252, sec. 1, 3.

<sup>188</sup> Page 11.

- 1992 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*  
 It's worth noting that the new *Catechism* cites St. Thomas Aquinas 61 times. Aquinas is cited second only to St. Augustine who is cited 87 times.<sup>189</sup> Whereas, a recent edition of the *Roman Catechism* only cites Aquinas once, and in a footnote at that.<sup>190</sup>  
 Part Three of the *Catechism*, 'Life in Christ,' relies significantly on Aquinas' moral structure contained in his *Summa*, according to Cardinal Ratzinger (Benedict XVI).<sup>191</sup>
- Encyclical Pastores Dabo Vobis (I Will Give You Shepherds)*  
 "St. Thomas is extremely clear when he affirms that the faith is as it were the habitus of theology, that is its permanent principle of operation, and that the whole of theology is ordered to nourishing the faith."<sup>192</sup>
- NCCB's Program for Priestly Formation*  
 In this document of the American Bishops they declare that "the perennial philosophy of St. Thomas should be given the recognition which Church teaching accords it."<sup>193</sup>

<sup>189</sup> Cf. pages 742-743.

<sup>190</sup> Cf. section on Sacraments, footnote 20.

<sup>191</sup> Cf. pages 751-752. Part Three of the *Catechism*, 'Life in Christ,' relies heavily upon St. Thomas' moral structure. "The structure of this 'fundamental moral theology' follows the great intuition of the *Summa* of St. Thomas. Is this the choice of a particular theological school? The commission [which organized the *Catechism*] was convinced that it should take the *doctor communis* as guide, not as the founder of a school, but as the great teacher of Christian morality." Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger and Christoph Schönborn, *Introduction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1994), 87-88.

<sup>192</sup> Chapter V.

<sup>193</sup> 4th Edition.



1993 Encyclical *Veritatis Splendor (The Splendor of Truth)*

"Going to the heart of the moral message of Jesus and the preaching of the Apostles, and summing up in a remarkable way the great tradition of the Fathers of the East and West, and of Saint Augustine in particular, Saint Thomas was able to write that the New Law is the grace of the Holy Spirit given through faith in Christ."<sup>194</sup>

"The Church has often made reference to the Thomistic doctrine of natural law, including in her own teaching on morality."<sup>195</sup>

1994 *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, book by Pope John Paul II

"Saint Thomas, however, did not abandon the philosophers' approach. He began his *Summa Theologica* with the question 'An Deus sit?' — 'Does God exist?'"<sup>196</sup> ...Even if today, unfortunately, the *Summa Theologica* has been somewhat neglected, its initial question persists and continues to resound throughout our civilization."<sup>197</sup>

"I think that it is wrong to maintain that Saint Thomas' position stands up only in the realm of the rational. One must, it is true, applaud Etienne Gilson when he agrees with Saint Thomas that the intellect is the most marvelous of God's creations, but that does not mean that we must give in to a unilateral rationalism. Saint Thomas celebrates all the richness and complexity of each created being, and especially of the human being. It is not good that his thought has been set aside in the post-conciliar period; he continues in fact, to be *the master of philosophical and theological universalism*."<sup>198</sup>

<sup>194</sup> Paragraph 24.

<sup>195</sup> Paragraph 44.

<sup>196</sup> Cf. I, q. 2, a. 3.

<sup>197</sup> Page 29.

<sup>198</sup> Page 31.

1998 Encyclical *Fides et Ratio (Faith and Reason)*

On the development of the complementarity of faith and reason, Pope John Paul II states: "A quite special place in this long development belongs to St. Thomas ... Both the light of reason and the light of faith come from God, he argued; hence there can be no contradiction between them."<sup>199</sup>

"More radically, Thomas recognized that nature, philosophy's proper concern, could contribute to the understanding of divine revelation."<sup>200</sup>

"Although he made much of the supernatural character of faith, the Angelic Doctor did not overlook the importance of its reasonableness; indeed he was able to plumb the depths and explain the meaning of this reasonableness."<sup>201</sup>

"This is why the Church has been justified in consistently proposing St. Thomas as a master of thought and a model of the right way to do theology."<sup>202</sup>

"Another of the great insights of St. Thomas was his perception of the role of the Holy Spirit in the process by which knowledge matures into wisdom. From the first pages of his *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas was keen to show the primacy of the wisdom which is the gift of the Holy Spirit and which opens the way to a knowledge of divine realities."<sup>203</sup>

"...St. Thomas was impartial in his love of truth. He sought truth wherever it might be found and gave consummate demonstration of its universality. In him, the Church's magisterium has seen and recognized the passion for truth; and, precisely because it stays consistently within the horizon of universal, objective and transcendent truth, his

<sup>199</sup> Paragraph 43.

<sup>200</sup> Paragraph 43.

<sup>201</sup> Paragraph 43.

<sup>202</sup> Paragraph 43.

<sup>203</sup> Paragraph 44.

thought scales 'heights unthinkable to human intelligence.'"<sup>204</sup>

"With the rise of the first universities, theology came more directly into contact with other forms of learning and scientific research. Although they insisted upon the organic link between theology and philosophy, St. Albert the Great and St. Thomas were the first to recognize the autonomy which philosophy and the sciences need if they were to perform well in their respective fields of research."<sup>205</sup>

Discussing the timeless relevance of Leo XIII's *Aeterni Patris*, Pope John Paul II states: "More than a century later, many of the insights of his encyclical letter have lost none of their interest from either a practical or pedagogical point of view — most particularly his insistence upon the incomparable value of the philosophy of St. Thomas. A renewed insistence upon the thought of the Angelic Doctor seemed to Pope Leo XIII the best way to recover the practice of a philosophy consonant with the demands of faith."<sup>206</sup>

"The positive results of the papal summons [of Leo XIII] are well known. Studies of the thought of St. Thomas and other Scholastic writers received new impetus. Historical studies flourished, resulting in a rediscovery of the riches of medieval thought, which until then had been largely unknown; and there emerged new Thomistic schools. With the use of historical method, knowledge of the works of St. Thomas increased greatly, and many scholars had courage enough to introduce the Thomistic tradition into the philosophical and theological discussions of the day. The most influential Catholic theologians of the present century, to whose thinking and research the Second Vatican Council was much indebted, were products of this revival

of Thomistic philosophy. Throughout the 20th century, the Church has been served by a powerful array of thinkers formed in the school of the Angelic Doctor."<sup>207</sup>

"It has been necessary from time to time... to reiterate the value of the Angelic Doctor's insights and insist on the study of his thought... because the magisterium's directives have not always been followed with the readiness one would wish. In the years after the Second Vatican Council, many Catholic faculties were in some ways impoverished by a diminished sense of the importance of the study not just of Scholastic philosophy, but more generally of the study of philosophy itself."<sup>208</sup>

"It should be clear... why the magisterium has repeatedly acclaimed the merits of St. Thomas' thought and made him the guide and model for theological studies... The magisterium's intention has always been to show how St. Thomas is an authentic model for all who seek the truth. In his thinking, the demands of reason and the power of faith found the most elevated synthesis ever attained by human thought."<sup>209</sup>

#### 1999 Apostolic Letter *Inter Munera Academicarum*

Pope John Paul II confirms that St. Thomas Aquinas remains the "eminent model" of theological and philosophical studies. The letter approves the new statutes of the Pontifical Academy of Saint Thomas Aquinas and the Pontifical Academy of Theology.

#### *Address to the Academicians of the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross*

"Contemplation of the union of the human and the divine in Christ, particularly in the crucified Christ, will not fail

<sup>204</sup> Paragraph 44; with internal quote from Leo XIII's *Aeterni Patris*.

<sup>205</sup> Paragraph 45.

<sup>206</sup> Paragraph 57.

<sup>207</sup> Paragraph 58.

<sup>208</sup> Paragraph 61.

<sup>209</sup> Paragraph 78.



to help you integrate the various fields of knowledge, to foster interdisciplinary study and to open you to the whole truth. In this task you will also find sound guidance in St. Thomas Aquinas, in whose thinking 'the demands of reason and the power of faith found the most elevated synthesis ever attained by human thought, for he could defend the radical newness introduced by Revelation without ever demeaning the venture proper to reason' (*Fides et Ratio*, 78)... I encourage you to pursue the commitment you have made to deepening your knowledge of doctrine, a commitment enlivened by a constant yearning for holiness."<sup>210</sup>

2000 *Address on the Jubilee for Men and Women of Learning*  
 "Men and women of learning, be builders of hope for all humanity! May God accompany you and make fruitful your efforts at the service of genuine human progress. May Mary, Seat of Wisdom, protect you. May St. Thomas Aquinas and the other holy men and women who, in various fields of learning have made a remarkable contribution to an ever deeper knowledge of created reality in light of the divine mystery, intercede for you."<sup>211</sup>

2005 Benedict XVI  
*Address to the University of the Sacred Heart*  
 "[Every Catholic university must be] a great laboratory in which, according to the different disciplines, new ways of research are always celebrated in a stimulating dialogue between faith and reason, which seeks to recover the harmonious synthesis reached by Thomas Aquinas and the other great Christian thinkers."<sup>212</sup>

<sup>210</sup> Address to the Academicians of the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, "The Cross Illumines All of Human Life," 5/29/99.

<sup>211</sup> Jubilee for Men and Women of Learning (5/25/00), Paragraph 6.

<sup>212</sup> Address to the University of the Sacred Heart, Rome, November 25, 2005.

## APPENDIX TWO

Summary of Views of Commentators  
on *Sacra Doctrina*, STh I, 1

Name	Model of <i>Sacra Doctrina</i>
Cajetan <sup>1</sup>	Revealed knowledge prescinding from its specification as faith or Theology
Sylvius <sup>2</sup>	The science of Theology
John of St. Thomas <sup>3</sup>	Art. 1 Theology as doctrine Art. 2-7 Theology as science Art. 8-9 Theology as doctrine
Báñez	Art. 1 Divine Revelation is necessary for salvation
Billuart	Q. 1 (except part of art. 1) Scholastic Theology Art. 1 Theology itself Art. 2-8 Theology as a science Art. 9-10 Sacred Scripture constitutes a good part of Theology
Buonpensiere <sup>4</sup>	In general all of q. 1 is about Theology Art. 1 The certain knowledge of truths produced by the supernatural light of Revelation

<sup>1</sup> Van Ackeren, *Sacra Doctrina*, 52.

<sup>2</sup> Van Ackeren, 52.

<sup>3</sup> Van Ackeren, 52.

<sup>4</sup> Weisheipl, "The Meaning of *Sacra Doctrina* in *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 1", 60.

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