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THE THOMIST

A SPECULATIVE QUARTERLY REVIEW
OF THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

Editors: The Dominican Fathers of the Province of St. Joseph

Publishers: The Thomist Press, Washington 17, D. C.

Vol. IX

JULY, 1946

No. 3

VIRTUES OF THE HOUSEHOLD

THE Church today is faced with its perennial problem of clerical and religious vocations in a more than usually acute stage. The problem itself, with its consequent problems of fostering and promoting vocations, has theological roots, the study of which goes far towards concentrating effort on the heart of the problem; and, indeed, goes to the depths of much of modern disorder within the family, the nation, and society. It is the purpose of this study to expose those theological roots to plain view.

Such an aim must not be interpreted as in any way a reflection on the highly intelligent attention the problem of ecclesiastical vocations has been receiving in this country. Under the auspices of The Missionary Union of The Clergy, conferences have been held in different parts of the country year by year, and studies have been made from almost every angle of the question of vocations? The acute needs of the Church for

¹ Confer *Vocation Conferences* of September, 1944, for the conference held in New York City; September, 1945, for the conference held in New Orleans; and the forthcoming issue for the conference held in January, 1946, in Washington, D. C.

vocations have been brought out in these conferences with no mincing of words; needs confirmed by fact and authority. There has been complete honesty in the facing of the shortage of vocations, and the possible causes of this shortage.

Most of the effort in these conferences has, naturally, been concentrated on the promotion and fostering of vocations. The encouragement of vocations is not a matter of selling individuals on a career of service, at great benefit to the individual *himself*; nor has this mistake been made. It has been clearly seen, and explicitly stated, that a vocation to the religious state or to the priesthood is a supernatural gift; only God, then, can be its author.

At the same time, there has been the entirely just conviction of a human part to be played in the development or decay of what God has given. It is along the line of this human part in vocations that most of the studies of the *Vocation Conferences* have proceeded. It has been seen that our human efforts must revolve mostly around the removal of impediments to the fulfillment of vocations, encouraging the necessary dispositions to their development, and nourishing their growth. A vocation to the priesthood or religious life is nothing less than an invitation to serve in the divine household. "Religion is a virtue whereby a man offers something to the service and worship of God. . . . Wherefore those are called religious who give themselves up entirely to the divine service. . . ." ²

Taking into consideration the essential nature of vocation and the human efforts possible in its favor, we find a real point of comparison with the war-time problem of morale. The comparison, far from being tenuous, has real roots as we shall see in the course of this study. The attempts to build up morale, or to sustain it at a high level, were efforts to increase the willingness of men to serve their country and even to make great sacrifices in that service. On the basis of this much of a

²"Religio, autem, . . . est quaedam virtus, per quam aliquis ad Dei servilium et cultum aliquid exhibet. Et ideo antonomastice religiosi dicuntur illi qui se totaliter mancipant divino servitio. . . ." *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 86, a. 1 corp.

comparison, it would seem that vexation, on it» human could be seen as the fruit of high religion» moraa- > < < efforts of men in the crises of combat were ** † n a- v.< <r/- high patriotic morale.

It is true 'hal i throughout 111 throughly mysterious factor; certainly there wa· littk officia) effort to give it a sharp definition. The effort· to footer jt «-y* worthy of the vagueness of their goal. Among the mean* *m-phasized, a large place was given to activities calculated to distract men — movies, theatrical skits, radio program·, officer/ clubs, and enlisted men's beer gardens. Clothes, food, and bring conditions were given much more attention than in any past war. There was a strenuous and highly imp· effort to keep the mail coming in. To a much lesser degree, there was some educational effort toward the realization of the puip of the war, the training, the methods adopted. All of these things ui loubtedly played their part. Yet the results consistently confounded the efforts of the morale builders. For high morale was found n who were in no position to be distracted; who had little food, insufficient clothes, and miserable living conditions: and who were far beyond the reach of the most zealous postman. On the contrary, the depths of morale were often plumbed among the very men who were within the fullest reach of the combined efforts of all the morale builders.

There has been no such bumbling in the promotion and fostering of vocations. Education in the meaning of religious and priestly life is persistently stressed. Greater efforts are being made to furnish adequate information and material for first-hand appreciation of this or that community. With the fundamental motivation of charity, loyalty, piety. self-sacrnce and zeal have been stressed. Nevertl vagueness, a confusion of incidental or dispositive oe:"<n with essential and direct causes, that is unnecessary and not at all helpful.

It seems possible to focus the efforts to foster and prvmotc

vocations still more sharply by unearthing the theological roots of the human dispositions of vocations. A clear delineation of the fundamental and essential elements should do away with any least scattering of our thought and action in favor of vocations. Actually, an investigation of the theological roots of religious and priestly vocation not only contributes to the work of fostering vocations but also lays the foundations for *highly* important conclusions in several different fields of human action. It will, for example, explain much that has been mysterious about patriotic morale, give some penetrating insights into family spirit and discipline, and give opportunities for highly interesting speculations on social relationships. Nor is the reason for this wide field of application obscure; in fact it might be made completely clear, and be effectively summarized, by saying that the theological roots of religious and priestly vocation make clear the reason, beauty, and attractiveness of all service to others.

The obvious note common to vocation and patriotic morale is that of service. Nor is this just any kind of service. It is service in the very humble sense of work to be done by a handmaid, a servant. It is significant that the statement of this condition is made by theologians through the Latin word *jamulatus*, a homely or terrible word according as it means the state of being a servant or of being a slave.

At any rate, there are some plain implications in this common note of service. There is, first of all, an essentially implied subjection, a fulfilling of assigned tasks and obedience to orders. This subjection itself is a kind of reverence and honor, even when it is no more than an external subjection with external reverence and honor; there is in it a recognition of superiority, in fact, a superiority that has about it an air of clarity and inviolability difficult to dispute. Vaguely, it is the kind of superiority recognized in something that is old enough to reach far back into the past; more sharply, it is the superiority attached to a thing that reaches back to and beyond our beginnings and embraces them.

This type of superiority is readily seen by a man, who recognizes without difficulty that he did not start himself. As a consequence, there is established an intimate kind of order in a man's life by this service demanded in the name of religion» vocation and patriotic morale: it gives him a clear sight of what is above him. If once a man sees clearly what is above him, all that is above him, he knows beyond cavil what belongs» beneath him; and by that fact he knows his own place with complete certitude.

The importance of a knowledge of his place is of incalculable value to a man. Without it, he cannot recognize usurpers of his life and his rights, let alone beat them off; nor can he protect himself from making a wreck of his life and a fool of himself through the assumption of roles for which he was never fitted. In proportion to the importance of the hierarchy this state of service reveals in a man's life, there are extreme demands made by it upon a man: results like combat sendee in wartime or the holocaust of one's life in religion approach the utmost that can be asked of men; the reverence and honor implied in subjection do not coincidentally to the pride of man; and order is never maintained without effort. If we are to find the roots of vocation and patriotic morale, we must look to the immediate sources of all good acts, that is, to the virtues: for this is clearly a matter of solidly good action, and even* good act is an act of virtue?

Specifically, then, it will be necessary to trace sendee to others to the particular virtue from which it proceeds. If that virtue is well understood, its proper acts clearly seen and thoroughly analyzed, the ultimate reasons for the reverence, honor, and consequent subjection demanded in the name of service will be uncovered. Our procedure in this paper will be as follows: 1) a determination of and an analysis of the nature of service, namely, religion, piety, patriotism, and observance

* . . . virtus et quae bonum facit habentem, et opus ejus bonum reddit; et necesse est dicere omnem actum bonum ad virtutem pertinere SvnwMt riwL II-II, q. 81, a. i corp.

in that order; 2) a thorough study of the *primary acts* of each of these virtues in order, namely, the first act of religion, the first act of *piety*, and so on. In the study of the virtues, much attention *will be paid to the* virtue of Religion for it is here that St. Thomas has his most explicit treatment of the principles *involved in the* service of others; much that will be said of the other virtues is implicit in Thomas' treatment of the virtue of *Religion, and thus* dependent on a thorough understanding of that virtue. The same will be true of the study of the acts of the virtues. The act of devotion, which is the primary act of the virtue of Religion, will be dealt with at considerable length; most of the conclusions relative to the primary acts of the other virtues of service are implicit in St. Thomas' treatment of the act of devotion. We begin our investigation with the virtue of Religion because we have already seen that the very notion of service to God, the essential notion of religious vocation, places it squarely under the virtue of Religion/



Virtue of Service to God—Religion

As St. Thomas analyzes the virtue of religion, he sees it as primarily a matter of honesty. Its chief concern is with the payment of an unpayable debt, or, at the very least, a recognition of this debt. It has about it the flavor of justice in that it has to do with our relations with another, namely God. It measures up to the notion of justice inasmuch as it deals with debts; but it falls far short of the equality of payment that strict justice demands. It is, then, a virtue annexed to justice, but distinct from it; a potential part of justice, falling short of full payment but doggedly proceeding as best it may to the straightforward dealing with debt that is the essential mark of an honest man. St. Thomas has put this succinctly:

Two points must be observed about the virtues annexed to a principal virtue. The first is that these virtues have something in

⁴ *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 86, a. 1 corp. Cf. footnote 2 *supra*.

common with the principal virtue; and the second . . . //me respect they fall short of the perfection of that virtue. Accordingly since justice is of one man to another, . . . all the virtue* that are directed to another person may by reason of this common aspect be annexed to justice. Now the essential character of justice consists in rendering to another his due according to equality, . . . Wherefore in two ways may a virtue directed to another person fall short of the perfection of justice: first, by falling short of the aspect of equality; secondly, by falling short of the aspect of due. For certain virtues there are which render another his due but are unable to render the equal due. In the first place, whatever man renders to God is due, yet it cannot be equal, as though man rendered to God as much as he owes Him. . . . In this respect religion is annexed to justice since, according to Tully, it consists in offering service and ceremonial rites or worship to some superior nature that men call divine.⁶

The debt, which is the sole concern of the virtue of religion, is not to be described by a vague wave of the hand at the wonders of the universe, the complexity of the life of man, or the simplicity of a child. It can be laid on the line in so many words, a challenge to the honesty of man, with no blurring of the outlines of the debtor's obligations. The virtue of religion is concerned with the debt man owes God under the precise formality of First Principle; God is the source, the start, the beginning of man's beginnings, the absolute first principle of man's being and of his guidance or direction to happiness.

... in virtutibus quae adjunguntur alicui principali virtuti, duo sunt sideranda: primo quidem, quod virtutes illae in aliquo cum principali virtute veniant: secundo, quod in aliquo deficiant a perfecta ratione ipsius. Qui justitia ad alterum est, . . . omnes virtutes quae ad alterum, possunt ratione venientiae justitiae annecti. Ratio vero justitiae consistit in hoc quod alteri datur quod ei debetur secundum aequalitatem. . . .

Dupliciter ergo aliqua virtus ad alterum existens a ratione justitiae deficit: uno quidem modo, in quantum deficit a ratione aequalis; alio modo, in quantum deficit a ratione debiti. Sunt enim quaedam virtutes quae debitum quidem alteri reddunt, sed non possunt reddere aequale. Et primo quidem quiddam ab homine Deo redditur, debitum est, non tamen potest esse aequale, ut scilicet tantum homo ei reddat, quantum debet. . . . Et secundum hoc adjungitur justitiae virtutes quae, ut dicit Tullius, . . . superioris cujusdam naturae, quam divinam vocant curam caeremoniamque affert. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 50. a. unie.

... it belongs to religion to show reverence to one God under one aspect, namely as the first principle of the creation and government of things." 6 . . . religion denotes properly a relation to God. For it is He to Whom we ought to be bound as to our *unfailing* principle; to Whom also our choice should be *resolutely directed* as to our last end; and Whom we lose when we neglect Him by sin, and should recover by believing in Him and confessing our faith." 7

It is particularly important here to read the words of St. Thomas most carefully, for it is essential to understand exactly the precise nature of the debt with which religion has to deal. Throughout its whole field, religion looks to the *first principle* of men; that is the "*one aspect*" under which it pays reverence to God. Even when referring to the last end of man, religion does so, not under the formality of an infinite good to be possessed, but under the formality of a first principle of guidance and government. It is a moral virtue which is properly about means to the end, not the end itself.⁸ Unless this rigid limitation of the object of religion is kept clearly in mind, it will be extremely difficult to distinguish its activities from those of charity, to speak accurately about its acts, and to establish clearly the proper supremacy of religion.

From the fact that God is man's first principle of being and of government, we have a double statement of the divine excellence. God is not infinitely good because He is the last end, and so the first principle of direction or government; rather, it is because of His infinite goodness that He is the last end.

§ Ad religionem autem pertinet exhibere reverentiam uni Deo secundum unam rationem, in quantum scilicet est primum principium creationis et gubernationis rerum. Unde ipse dicit Malach. 1, G: § ego Pater, ubi honor incus? Patris enim est producere et gubernare. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 3.

7. . . religio proprie importat ordinem ad Deum. Ipse enim est cui principaliter alligari debemus tamquam indeficienti principio: ad quem etiam nostra electio assidue dirigi debet sicut in ultimum finem; quem etiam négligentes peccando amittimus, et credendo, et fidem protestando recuperare debemus. *Ibid.*, a. 1. Confer *ibid.*, a. 1, ad Sum et 4um.

8. . . est virtus moralis, cujus est esse circa ea quae sunt ad finem. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 5 corp.

On the other hand, as first principle of being, God has the infinite excellence undeniable to the first cause, The recognition of this divine excellence is the fundamental payment by religion of man's debt to God.

The good to which religion is directed, is to give due honor to God. Again, honor is due to someone under the aspect of excellence: and to God a singular excellence is competent, since He infinitely surpasses all things and exceeds them in every way.

By one and the same act man both serves and worships God for worship regards the excellence of God, to Whom reverence is due: while service regards the subjection of man, who, by his condition is under an obligation of showing reverence to God. To these two belong all the acts ascribed to religion, because, by them all, man bears witness to the Divine excellence and to his own subjection to God. . . . 10

This, then, is the double note of the religious debt man owes to God: reverence for the divine excellence and subjection to the divine principality. Actually, the two are different sides of one and the same act of worship; and this act, in its essential nature, is no more than an honest recognition of the first principle of man's being and government. By recognizing that divine principality, man is at the same time protesting the divine excellence which brought him into being and directs him to happiness, and his own orderly position beneath that supremely excellent Being.

The debt is paid by the acts of religion. Its payment is a matter of honesty, a matter of order, and a matter of great privilege. By it, the very foundation of all order is established in a man's moral life; he recognizes that his place in the world

* Bonum nutem nd quod ordinatur religio, est exhibere Deo debitum bouceea. Honor nutem debetur alicui ratione excellentiae. Deo autem competit excellentia, in quantum omnia in infinitum transcendit secundum omnmxhmi excessum. *Summa Theol.*, II-II. q. SI. a. 4 corp.

10. . . eodem actu homo servit Deo et colit ipsum; nam cultus respicit De excellentim, cui reverentia debetur; servitus autem respicit subjectionem bocmr.is. qui ex sua conditione obligatur ad exhibendam reverentiam Deo. Et ad haec duo pertinent omnes actus qui religioni attribuuntur, quia per omnes homo psxMesUhv divinam excellentiam et subjectionem sui ad Deum. . . . II-IL q. 81, a. 3 ad 2um.

is beneath *God, while at the same time* lit* has an insight into his own dignity from the knowledge he has of his sources. Obviously, man's subjection to God is not a humiliation of himself, since it is one and the same act of recognition of the truth of divine excellence.

II. 1]

We pay God honor and reverence, not for His sake (because He is of *Himself full of glory to which* no creature can add anything), but for our own sake, because by the very fact that we revere and honor God, our mind is subjected to Him; wherein its perfection consists, since a thing is perfected by being subjected to its superior; for instance, the body is perfected by being quickened by the soul“

This is man's place, this is where he belongs; and a man is not humiliated, debased, or impeded in his progress to perfection by being in his proper place any more than the human eye is humiliated, debased, or impeded by being in its proper place in a human head.

This is a paltry payment for so great a debt. Indeed, the magnitude of the debt is itself a complete guarantee that our payment will be inadequate.

Religion is . . . a moral virtue . . . and observes a mean . . . in actions directed to God, by establishing a kind of equality in them. And when I say *equality*, I do not mean absolute equality, because it is not possible to pay God as much as we owe Him, but equality in consideration of man's ability and God's acceptance.]

On this score, then, we need not be afraid of going too far; since the debt exceeds our greatest efforts to liquidate it, there can be no question of our ever paying too much.

11. . . Deo reverentiam et honorem exhibemus, non propter seipsum, quia ex seipso est gloria plenus, cui nihil a creatura adjici potest, sed propter nos, quia videlicet per hoc quod Deum reveremur, et honoramus, mens nostra ei subjicitur; et in hoc ejus perfectio consistit; quaelibet enim res perficitur per hoc quod subditur suo superiori, sicut corpus per hoc quod vivicatur ab anima, . . . *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 7 corp.

13. . . religio est virtus . . . moralis . . . et medium in ipsa accipitur . . . secundum quamdam aequalitatem inter operationes quae sunt ad Deum. Dico autem *aequalitatem* non absolute, quia Deo non potest tantum exhiberi, quantum ei debetur, sed secundum quamdam considerationem humanae facultatis, et divinae actionis. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 5, ad Sum.

VIRTUES OF THE HOL'HEHOMJ

And it is possible to have too much Divine Worship, not so regards the circumstance of quantity, as regards other circumstances, as when Divine worship is paid to whom it is not due, or when it is not due, or unduly in some other circumstance.^{1*}

There can be no such thing as too much religion, though it is possible to have serious neglect of things that must not be neglected under the invalid excuse of religious exercises.

On the other hand, we are not to be blamed or dwindle, at the miserly amount we can pay on our debt to our final principle.

Virtue is praised because of the will, not because of the ability: and therefore if a man fall short of equality which is the mean of justice, through lack of ability, his virtue deserves no less praise, provided there be no failing on the part of his will.^{1*}

A man who throws his life on the counter in payment of his debt of religion is hardly making a princely gesture if we consider the infinite perfection and riches of God. What will this add to the life of God?

In offering a thing to a man on account of its usefulness to him, the more needy the man the more praiseworthy the offering, because it is more useful: whereas we offer a thing to God not on account of its usefulness to Him, but for the sake of His glory, and on account of its usefulness to us.^{1*}

On both counts, then, this is the supreme religious gesture: for by it a man has given all that he has to give, and he has by that fact touched the peak of moral perfection, if only for the moment of his victorious surrender.

*. *Ibid.*

14. . . laus virtutis in voluntate consistit, non autem in potestate; et ex eo à Scæv ab aequalitate, quae est medium justitiae, propter defectum potestatis. non laudem virtutis, si non fuerit defectus ex parte voluntatis. Swr,-a Γ»,λ ; a. 6, ad lum.

11. . . in his quae exhibentur aliis propter eorum utilitatem, est ex laudabilior quae fit magis indigenti, quia est utilior. Deo autem non aliquid propter ejus utilitatem, sed propter ejus gloriam. nostram autem ubertate *Ibid.*, ad 2um. Confer *supra*. footnote 11.

The virtue of *religion is a household virtue*. It puts man in his proper place as a servant in the divine household, busying him in that humble service that is yet his greatest perfection and at the same time his full tribute of reverence and honor to the *divine excellence*. Religion is busy about the household tasks. “*God is related to religion not as matter or object, but as end: and consequently religion is not a theological virtue whose object is the last end, but a moral virtue which is properly about things referred to the end.*”¹⁰ Faith, hope, and charity, looking directly to God as to their object, are the superiors of the virtue of religion; religion bows to them and moves at their command. But this is the only obeisance religion need make in the company of virtues.

In the busy moral life of man, the life consumed in handling the means to the end of man, religion stands supreme.

Whatever is directed to an end takes its goodness from being ordered to that end; so that the nearer it is to the end, the better it is. Now moral virtues . . . are about matters that are ordered to God as to their end. And religion approaches nearer to God than the other moral virtues, in so far as its actions are directly and immediately ordered to the honor of God. Hence religion excels among the moral virtues.¹⁷

This, then, comes first: before justice and all its other allied virtues, before temperance and its allied virtues, before fortitude and its allies, before prudence itself; for this is the fundamental virtue for the orderly conduct of man's moral life.

It is important to notice that for a man thus to apply himself and his acts to God by religion, two conditions are essential.

10. . . Deus non comparatus ad virtutem religionis sicut materia vel objectum, sed sicut finis. Et ideo religio non est virtus theologica, cujus objectum est ultimus finis; sed est virtus moralis, cujus est esse circa ea quae sunt ad finem. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 5 corp. Confer *ibid.*, ad lum.

17. . . ea quae sunt ad finem, sortiuntur bonitatem ex ordine in finem; et ideo quanto sunt fini propinquiora, tanto sunt meliora. Virtutes autem morales, . . . sunt circa ea quae ordinantur in Deum sicut in finem. Religio autem magis de propinquo accedit ad Deum quam aliae virtutes morales, in quantum operatur ea quae directe et immediate ordinantur in honorem divinum. Et ideo religio praeminet inter alias virtutes morales. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 0 corp.

For cleanness is necessary in order that the mind be united to God, since the human mind is soiled by contact with inferior things, even as all things depreciate by admixture with base matter. For instance, silver by being mixed with lead. Now in order for the mind to be united to the Supreme Being it must be withdrawn from inferior things; and hence it is that without cleanness the mind cannot be applied to God. . . . Again, firmness is required for the mind to be applied to God, for it is applied to Him as its last end and first beginning, and such things must needs be most immovable. . . .¹⁸

Without this spiritual cleanliness and stability, religion will not play a predominant role in a man's life, which is to say that human life will be fundamentally disordered throughout.

With this cleanliness and stability, however, religion proceeds to its acts: internal acts, which are religion's principal and *per se* acts; and the external acts which are secondary and ordered to the internal acts.

Now the human mind, in order to be united to God, is not guided by the sensible world. . . . Wherefore in the Divine worship it is necessary to make use of corporeal things, that man's mind may be aroused thereby, as by signs, to the spiritual acts by means of which he is united to God. Therefore the internal acts take precedence of the others and belong to religion essentially, while its external acts are secondary, and subordinate to the internal acts.¹⁸ These external things are offered to God, not as though He stood in need of them. . . . but as signs of the internal and spiritual works, which are of themselves acceptable to God.

*¹⁸ Munditia enim necessaria est ad hoc quod mens Deo applicetur, quia mens humana inquinatur ex hoc quod inferioribus rebus conjungitur, sicut quaelibet res ex immixtione peioris sordescit, ut argentuni ex innixtione plumbi. Oportet autem quod mens ab inferioribus rebus abstrahatur, ad hoc quod supremæ rei possit conjungi. Et ideo mens sine munditia Deo applicari non potest. . . . Firmitas etiam exigitur ad hoc quod mens Deo applicetur; applicat enim ei sicut ultimo fini et primo principio; hujusmodi autem oportet maxime immobilia esse. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 5 corp.

¹⁸ Mens autem humana indiget, ad hoc quod conjungatur Deo. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 7 corp. Et ideo in divino cultu necesse est aliquibus corporalibus uti, ut eis quasi signis quibusdam mens hominis excitetur ad spirituales actus, quibus Deo conjungitur. Et ideo religio habet quidem interiores actus quasi *per se* ad religionem pertinentes; exteriores vero actus quasi secundarios, et ad interiores actus ordinatos. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 7 corp.

Hence Augustine says: *The visible sacrifice is the sacrament or sacred sign of the invisible sacrifice.*²⁰

Man, being what *he is*, *must* have external religious acts; but *these will always* remain secondary and ordered to the internal acts by which he is religiously united to God, i. e., by which lie reverences and honors God, subjecting himself.

Looking back, now at the virtue of religion (from which vocation springs) we see it as a virtue working at the payment of the debt due to God as the First Principle of our being and government. It does this by its tribute of reverence and honor for the excellence of God, of subjection for the divine principality; both by the single act of worship, which is no more than the honest recognition of God's superior place.

Religion, then, is a matter of honesty in meeting one's debts; it is a matter of order, of hierarchy in a man's life, in recognizing the superiority of the first principle; and a matter of privilege, for by that very subjection which puts order in a man's life, he is himself perfected.

The debt religion deals with is unpayable of its very nature; obviously, we cannot in our turn be first principle to God. We can never, then, pay too much on that debt; there can be no excess in the matter of religion, there can be only abuses of the circumstances of time, place and so on in the placing of religious acts. On the other hand, there is no room for despair at the paltriness of our best efforts in meeting this debt, for the measure of our efforts is not our power to pay but our willingness to acknowledge the debt and offer what we have.

Religion is a moral virtue, busy with the means by which a man strides to his last end. So, it is beneath the theological virtues which soar directly to that last end. But it is supreme among all the moral virtues because, among them, it approaches most closely to the end of man's whole life. Its external acts

ao. . . hujusmodi exteriora non exhibentur Deo, quasi his indigeat: . . . Sed exhibentur Deo tamquam signa quaedam interiorum, et spiritualium operum, quae per se Deus acceptat. Unde Augustinus dicit in 10 de Civ. Dei, cap. 5, parum a prine.: *Sacrificium visibile invisibilis sacrificii sacramentum, id est sacrum signum est. Ibid., ad 2um.*

(necessary because man is what he is, a creature of body and soul) exist only for the internal acts by which man actually pays the debt due to God, the debt of worship. For these acts, internal and external, he needs cleanliness and stability. In proportion as he plunges into things beneath him, he becomes increasingly incapable of religious acts; as he fixes his hold on wavering supports, he has less capacity to hold fast to the immovable principles of his being and government.

This summary of the characteristics of the virtue of religion will, as we shall see, take on peculiar significance in dealing with the household virtues that establish order in the domestic, the patriotic, and the social world. For what has been said of religion relative to the whole life of man is proportionately true of these virtues in their own proper sphere. It is time now to look at these virtues and their origin in some detail.



Objects of Service Other Than God

Under God, man has other principles of his being and government which, by the very fact of sharing in the principality of God, lay solid claim to reverence and subjection from men. The descent from religion through these other virtues will be a gradual one proportioned to the lessening share in the divine principality enjoyed by these other principles.

. . . whatever man renders to God is due. yet it cannot be equal, as though man rendered to God as much as he owes Him. . . . In this respect *religion* is annexed to justice. . . . Secondly, it is not possible to make to one's parents an equal return of what one owes to them . . . ; and thus *piety* is annexed to justice, for thereby, as Tully says (*Zoc. cit.*), *a man renders service and constant deference to his kindred and the well-wishers of his country.* Thirdly, according to the Philosopher, man is unable to offer an equal meed for virtue, and thus *observance* is annexed to justice, consisting according to Tully (*Zoc. cit.*) in the deference and honor rendered to those who excel in worth.²¹

.I. . . quidquid ab homine Deo redditur, debitum est, non tamen potest esse aequale, ut scilicet tantum homo ei reddat, quantum debet. . . . Et secundum hoc

. . . according to the various excellences of those persons to whom something is due, there must needs be a corresponding distinction of virtues in a descending order. Now just as a carnal father partakes of the character of principle in a particular way, which character is found in God in a universal way, so too a person who, in some way, exercises providence in one respect, partakes of the character of father in a particular way, since a father is the principle of generation, of education, of learning and of whatever pertains to the perfection of human life: while a person who is in a position of *dignity is as a* principle of government with regard to certain things: for instance, the governor of a state in civil matters, the commander of an army in matters of warfare, a professor in matters of learning and so forth. . . . Therefore, just as, in a manner beneath religion, whereby worship is given to God, we find piety, whereby we honor our parents, so under piety we find observance, whereby reverence and honor are paid to persons in positions of dignity.²²

God is the absolutely first principle of our being and government. This divine principality is shared by our parents, as the first in the line of secondary causes; it is further shared by our country; and, in varying degrees, by individual men. From all of these we, in some sense, spring; by all of them we are guided to happiness, governed. To all of **them**, then, in lessening degrees, we owe unpayable debts.

adjungitur justitiae *religio*. . . . Secundo, parentibus non potest secundum aequalitatem recompensari quod eis debetur . . . ; et sic adjungitur justitiae *pietas*, per quam, ut Tullius dicit loc. cit. *sanguine junctis patriacuae benevolis officium et diligens tribuitur cultus*. Tertio, non potest secundum aequale praemium recompensari ab homine virtus . . . et sic adjungitur justitiae *observantia*, per quam, ut Tullius dicit, loc. sup. cit., homines aliqua dignitate antecedentes quodam cultu cl honore dignantur. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 80, a. 1.

22. . . necesse est ut eo modo per quemdam ordinatum descensum distinguantur virtutes, sicut excellentia personarum quibus est aliquid reddendum. Sicut autem carnalis pater particulariter participat rationem principii, quae universaliter invenitur in Deo. ita etiam persona quae quantum ad aliquid providentiam circa nos gerit, particulariter participat proprietatem patris, quia pater est principium et generationis, et educationis, et disciplinae, et omnium quae ad perfectionem humanae vitae pertinent; persona autem in dignitate constituta est sicut principium gubernationis respectu aliquarum rerum; sicut princeps civitatis in rebus civilibus, dux autem exercitus in rebus bellicis, magister autem in disciplinis; et simile est in aliis. . . . Et ideo sicut sub religione, per quam cultus tribuitur Deo, quodammodo invenitur pietas, per quam coluntur parentes, ita sub pietate invenitur observantia, per quam cultus et honor exhibetur personis in dignitate constitutis. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102, a. 1.

. . . Man becomes a debtor to other men in various ways, according to their various excellences and the various benefits received from them. On both counts God holds first place for He is supremely excellent, and is for us the first principle of being and government. In the second place, the principles of our being are our parents and our country, that have given us birth and nourishment. Consequently man is debtor chiefly to his parents and his country, after God. Wherefore just as it belongs to religion to give worship to God, so does it belong to piety, in the second place, to give honor to one's parents and one's country?²³

Virtue of Service in the Home—Piety

The virtue of piety, as it is spoken of by St. Thomas, extends to both parents and country. However, since in ordinary usage we speak of piety towards country as patriotism, throughout the rest of this paper we shall reserve the word "piety" for piety towards parents, calling piety towards country "patriotism."²⁴

Piety, then, ranking immediately below religion among these virtues dealing with unpayable debts, has for its work towards parents in the narrower field of domestic life what religion does towards God in the whole field of moral life.²⁵ What has been said of the virtue of religion can be said, preserving the proper proportion, of the virtue of piety; it has exactly the same task, in a narrower and secondary field, to be performed in proportionately the same way.

²³ "... homo efficitur diversimode aliis debitor, secundum eorum diversam excellentiam et diversa beneficia ab eis suscepta. In utroque autem Deus summum obtinet locum; qui et excellentissimus est, et est nobis essendi et gubernationis principium; secundario vero nostri esse et gubernationis principia sunt parentes et patria, a quibus et in qua nati et nutriti sumus. Et ideo post Deum est homo maxime debitor parentibus et patriae. Unde sicut ad religionem pertinet cultum Deo exhibere, ita secundario gradu ad pietatem pertinet exhibere cultum parentibus et patriae. *Summa Theol., ibid.,* q. 101. a. 1. Cf. *ibid.,* q. 51. a. 4.

²⁴ The question as to whether the difference between piety and patriotism is merely verbal or real, with its consequent question of one or two virtues expressed by these words, is a matter of discussion among theologians.

²⁵ Cf. *supra*, footnotes 22 and 23.

. . . the good to which religion is directed is to give due honor to God. Again, honor is due to someone under the aspect of excellence: and to God a singular excellence is competent, since He infinitely surpasses all things and exceeds them in every way. Wherefore to Him is special honor due: even as in human affairs we see that different honor is due to different personal excellences, one kind to a father, another to the king, and so on.²⁰

Like religion, then, piety is a matter of honesty, of order, and of privilege. It is a matter of honesty, for it is a matter of paying a debt: the debt we owe our parents as principles of our being and government. More concretely, we owe them reverence and subjection; reverence for their excellence (or superiority to us) as principles, and subjection by reason of that principality. Both of these, reverence and subjection, are actually paid in one and the same act of veneration or honor, just as religion in its one act of worship both reverences God and subjects man to Him. There is a sharp difference here between the subjection of a man to parents as a principle of direction and the subjection involved in the reverence paid to a principle of being.

The prince is compared to the father as a universal to a particular power, as regards external government, but not as regards the father being a principle of generation: for in this way the father should be compared with the divine power from which all things derive their being.²⁷

A father is a principle of being immediately under God as first principle; but he is a principle of external government only mediately, under the state which is the immediate participant

²⁰. . . Bonum autem ad quod ordinatur religio, est exhibere Deo debitum honorem. Honor autem debetur alicui ratione excellentiae. Deo autem competit singularis excellentia, in quantum omnia in infinitum transcendit secundum omnimodum excessum. Unde ei debetur specialis honor; sicut in rebus humanis videmus quod diversis excellentiis personarum diversus honor debetur, alius quidem patri, alius regi, et sic de aliis. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 4.

²⁷Princeps comparatur ad patrem, sicut universalis virtus ad particularem, quantum ad exteriorem gubernationem, non autem quantum ad hoc quod pater est principium generationis; sic enim comparatur ad ipsum virtus divina, quae est omnium productiva in esse. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102, a. 3, ad lum.

of the principality of God as first principle of direction or government. The reason for this is not hard to see. The governing principle of all means (with which these virtues of the unpayable debts alone deal) is the end. Now God is the final end $\langle A$ man, and so the first principle of direction or government; the state is an intermediary end further ordered to the final end of man's happiness, and, as an end, can be a limited principle of direction or government; but parents are in no sense an end of the children. What principality they have in government will be participated from the state, or exercised by way of regency during the immature years of the child.²³ This last is of no small importance; it really means that the dependency of the child under this aspect, and so its obligation to honor, reverence, and give subjection, is quite complete during these years, though it steadily diminishes with maturity. The obligation to honor, reverence, and subjection to parents as principles of being endures unchanged for all time.

In this regard, a full statement of the parents' principality of being reveals the great responsibility this principality lays upon the parents. . . . a father is the principle of generation, of education, of learning and of whatever pertains to the perfection of human life: — — \setminus In the ordinary discipline and training of children, the father is acting as a principle of being, not as a governor; whoever exercises any share of this training and discipline is really sharing in the principality of the father as principle of being.⁸⁰

In this matter of the unpayable debt to parents, it is also true that there can be no such thing as overpaying the debt; there cannot be too much of piety. What abuses creep in here

.. *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ . . . pater est principium et generationis, et educationis, et disciplinae, et omnium quae ad perfectionem humanae vitae pertinent. *Summa Theol.*, II-II. q. 102, a. 1.

⁸⁰ " . . . so too a person who, in some way exercises providence in one respect, partakes of the character of father in a particular way, since a father is the principle of generation, etc." (ita etiam persona quae quantum ad aliquid prouidentia circa nos gerit, particulariter participat proprietatem patris, quia pater est principium et generationis, etc.) *Summa Theol. Ibid.*

are due to other circumstances than the circumstance of quantity. The debt is unpayable by its very nature; it cannot be overpaid. The very best we can give in payment will still seem paltry; yet, our payment is not to be judged by our incapacity but by our *will to pay* the debt.³¹

Piety, like religion, is a matter of order. It docs for the domestic sphere what religion does for all of moral life; showing man clearly what is above him, and by that fact making plain his own place in the domestic circle. It establishes, then, the fundamental order in the home. The child is beneath the parent, the son beneath the father, in a subjection of reverence and honor; yet that subjection is not to the child's degradation but to its perfection. For the payment of this debt to parents, like the payment of the religious debt to God, is not for the perfection of the parents or their utility, but primarily for the perfection of the child.³² Our reverence and honor and subjection add nothing to the principality of the parents; they add much to the perfection of ourselves.³³ True enough, parents have not the infinite perfection of God, and so there is none of the same impossibility of our working for their benefit. But this payment of the debt of piety will, of itself, do no more for the parents than ease a little of the hunger of the human heart for appreciation and gratitude. Accidentally, it may indeed happen that our parents have dire need of our assistance; in that case, in the name of the honor we owe them as principles, we are obliged to come to their assistance. But this is by way of exception and accidentally: in themselves, the parents are, in their capacity of principles, to provide for the child, not the child for the parent.

We owe something to our parents in two ways: that is to say, both essentially and accidentally. We owe them essentially that which is due to a father as such; and since he is his son's superior through being the principle of his being, the latter owes him reverence and service. Accidentally, that is due to a father which it befits him to receive in respect of something accidental to him, for instance, if he

¹¹ Confer *supra*, footnotes 12 and 14.

²² Confer *supra*, footnote 11.

³³ *Ibid.*

be ill, it is fitting that his children should visit him and *U*» hit cure; if he be poor, it is fitting that they should support him; ar*d so on in like instance, all of which come under the head of i^rvict due.*

Since a father stands in the relation of principle, and bit son in the relation of that which is from a principle, it is **essentially** fitting for a father to support his son: and consequently he is bound to support him not only for a **time**, but for all his life, and this is to lay by. On the other hand, for the son to bestow something on hit father is accidental, arising from some momentary' **necessity**, wherein he is bound to **support** him, but not to lay by as for a long time beforehand, **because naturally** parents are not the successors of their children, but children of **their** parents.*5

Just as religion does not look primarily to the goodness of God but to His excellence and principality, so piety does not look primarily to the goodness of parents; goodness is the proper object of love, **not of piety**. This reverence, honor, and subjection owed to parents is **not** in itself dependent on love for the parents; it is a **debt** that flows from their very position as principles of **being and direction**. Love, of course, will increase piety, and piety will usually lead to love and the increase of love. **But this right to the payment** made by piety, is not one which the **parents surrender** by the character of their lives/

14. . . parentibus . . . aliquid debetur dupliciter: uno modo per *te*, alio modo per *accidens*. Per se quidem debetur eis id quod decet patrem, in quantum pater est: qui cum sit sui>erior, quasi principium filii existens, debetur ei a filio reverentia et obsequium. Per accidens autem aliquid debetur patri, quod decet eum accipere secundum aliquid quod ei accidit; puta si sit infirmus, quod visitetur et ejus curationi intendatur; si sit pauper, quod sustentetur, et sic de aliis hujusmodi, quae omnia sub debito obsequio continentur. *Summa Theoi.*, II-II, q. 101, a. i. Confer *ibid.*, ad lum.

” . . . quia pater habet rationem principii, filius autem habet rationem a principio existentis, ideo per se patri convenit ut subveniat filio; et propter hoc noa solum ad horam debet ei subvenire sed ad totam suam vitam, quod est thesaurizare. Sed quod filius aliquid conferat patri, hoc est per accidens ratione alicujus necessitatis instantis, in qua tenetur ei subvenire, non autem thesaurixarr quasi m kxipn-quum, quia naturaliter non parentes filiorum, soil filii parentum sunt snocesswes. *Summa Thcol.*, II-II, q. 101, a. 2, ad Sum.

’. “The object of love is the good: the object of honor or reverence, hoarver, is something excellent.” (. . . objectum amoris est bonum; objectum autem honoris vel reverentiae est aliquid excellens.) *Summa Thcol.*, II-II, q. SI, a. 4, ad Sum. Confer *ibid.*, q. 82, a. 2, ad 2um.

How far should that respect for parents go? Well, at the very least, it must include not only honor, but all the becoming acts that rule the relations of one man to another. “. . . in veneration, there is to be understood not only honor, but also whatever else pertains to the becoming acts by which one man is ordered to another.”³⁷

Like religion, piety also demands, as conditions dispositive to its activity, a certain cleanliness and stability. After all, it is looking to what is above; the sordidness that infects the mind from commerce with what is beneath man is no preparation for consideration of superior things. Moreover, the whole activity of piety circles around the principles of man's being and government; and principles, as stable, enduring elements in a man's life, demand a firmness and loyalty from the man who would hold fast to them.³⁸ As with the acts of religion, where the external ones are ordered to and exist for the internal acts, so in the acts of piety; the honor, reverence, and subjection externally manifested are for the internal by which alone a man takes his proper place in the family, really venerating the parents to whom he is so hopelessly indebted.³⁹ The debt of piety extends beyond parents to all blood relations, yet never loses that essential aspect of a debt to parents; for the veneration we give blood relations is precisely because of their relationship to common parents.⁴⁰

A house without piety can hardly lay title to the hallowed name of home. It is lacking in fundamental order; it is not so much disordered as in chaos. No one really belongs here, for no one has his place in such an establishment. The child's

“ . . . in cultu non solum intelligitur honor, sed etiam quaecumque alia quae pertinent ad decentes actus quibus homo ad alium ordinatur. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102, a. 2, ad lum.

M Confer *supra*, footnote 18.

N Confer *supra*, footnote 19.

⁴⁰ “The honor due to our parents includes the honor given to all our kindred, since our kinsfolk are those who descend from the same parents.” (In cultu autem parentum includitur cultus omnium consanguineorum, quia etiam *consanguinei* ex hoc dicuntur quod ex eisdem parentibus processerunt. . . .) *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 101, a. 1.

rights are as vague as his obligation; the parents' necessities as dimly seen as their duties. It is a topsy-turvy domestic world committed to a condition of civil war and selfish rivalry. It is a dishonest establishment, since it has eliminated the fundamental honesty involved in the recognition of the fundamental domestic debt. It is no place of privilege or perfection for the child, who is given no reason here for that reverence, honor and subjection that would do so much to perfect him; there is no hierarchy here, the child must fight for what he can get, and, of course, the child loses, never more emphatically than when he has his way.



Virtue of Service to Country—Patriotism

Patriotism, or piety towards one's country, is the next virtue in the descending scale of these virtues which deal with unpayable debts. It operates in the particularized field delimited by the principality of one's country in the being and government of a man. It is a principle of being in a tertian sense, below the secondary principles who are the parents; it is a principle of government in a secondary sense, beneath the first principle of government who is God. This has all been explained in the past few pages. In this sense, a man's country is one of his sources, his principles; as such it lays valid claim in justice to reverence, honor and subjection from him. The facing of this debt is, in the patriotic field, a matter of order, honesty, and privilege as it was in the domestic and religious domains.

The common good is not the object of patriotism, any more than the goodness of God, or the welfare of the parents is the object of religion and piety. These virtues do not look to the good but to the excellent by reason of principality: what patriotism aims at is the recognition of the superiority of one's country, in the limited field of its superiority, and the subjection of man in that same limited field. Patriotism, then, is not primarily a matter of love of country as it is a matter of service to country, fundamentally, the service implied in the veneration

of country that includes reverence, honor and subjection. Love of country contributes to patriotism, as patriotism does to love of country; but they must be clearly distinguished, as charity and religion must be distinguished, if we are to understand the true place and dignity of patriotism.

Preserving the proper proportions, all that was said of religion and of piety must be repeated of patriotism. It guarantees the fundamental order in the national scene, showing a man his proper place by insisting on what is above him; thereby letting him know with certainty what is beneath him, that he might protect his rights as well as fulfill his duties. Patriotism is primarily a matter of honesty, not of sentiment; there cannot be too much of it, nor is the least offering to be despised if the will behind it is above the reproach of stinginess or selfishness in payment of this unpayable debt.

It, too, has its external and internal acts, of which the external are ordered to the internal. In our usual consideration of patriotic acts, we concentrate on the good to the state coming from them; actually, they exist for the internal act of patriotism by which a man really pays on the debt to his principles of being and government. For the payment of this debt is not for the utility of the principles but of the debtors to those principles; it does not, itself, add to the principality of the state, but it does, in itself, add considerably to the perfection of the citizen. For the object of patriotism is not the common good, but the debt owed to the principality of the state; it exists for the ordering of a man within the national life, and for the ordering of all his acts that contribute to that national life.⁴¹

For the activity of patriotism, it is necessary to have, by way of disposition, a certain cleanliness and stability, on proportionately the same grounds as was outlined above for the activities of the virtues of religion and piety. For patriotism, too, looks

⁴¹ "Piety extends to our country in so far as the latter is for us a principle of being: but legal justice regards the good of our country, considered as the common good . . . pietas se extendit ad patriam, secundum quod est nobis quoddam essendi principium; sed justitia legalis respicit bonum patriae, secundum quod est bonum commune: . . .) *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 101, a. 8, ad Sum.

to superior principles; cleanliness is essential for the vivjft of superior things, stability for the continued conta/A with principles.

Without patriotism, the nation is no longer a community but a mob whose members are intent on destroying each other. There is no order, no hierarchy, no basis for anything but cbao*. No reverence, honor or subjection. Consequently, the national life of the community is basically undermined by a fundamental dishonesty which totally disregards the fundamental debt of the citizen. The individual citizen, of course, loses; he has no place here, all the privileges of his place and the perfection of it is denied him; he cannot detect usurpers of his rights, nor defend himself against them. The national life going on about him must be as terrifying to the individual citizen as the ravings of a maniac are to a sane, normal person.*'

Virtue of Service to Men—Observance

The virtue of observance has to do with a double debt, the debt owed to those in authority and that owed to superiors in virtue and knowledge. St. Thomas insists that both are unpayable, but not for the same reason: the virtuous and the learned cannot, on that score alone, lay claim to principality over other men; while those constituted in authority unquestionably do participate in the principality of the state.

. . . the fact that a man has perfection of science and virtue does not give him the character of a principle in relation to others, but merely a certain excellence in himself.¶1

It belongs to persons in positions of dignity to govern subjects. Now to govern is to move certain ones to their due end: . . . But

41A detailed analysis of the virtue of patriotism can be found in *QueHtwr Citizenship in St. Thomas*, by Gerard Joubert, O. P., Catholic Univ. Press (Washington, 1942).

43 Ex hoc autem quod aliquis habet perfectionem scientiae vd virtutis. noa sortitur rationem principii quantum ad alios, sed solum quamdam eJXeUentiaa ia seipso. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102. a, 1, ad 2um.

*every mover has a certain excellence and power over that which is moved. Wherefore a person in a position of dignity is an object of twofold consideration: first, in so far as he obtains excellence of position, together with a certain power over subjects: secondly, as regards the exercise of his government. In respect of his excellence there is due to him honor, which is the recognition of some kind of excellence; and in respect of the exercise of his government, there is due to him worship, consisting in rendering him service, by obeying his commands, and by repaying him, according to one's faculty, for the benefits we receive from him.*⁴⁸

The man constituted in authority, precisely as such, participates the principality of the state. When service to him is viewed formally in relation to the common good, that service is a work of patriotism and deserves no further treatment here. But when it is viewed in a more personal fashion, in relation, namely, to the glory or utility of the one constituted in authority, then it comes squarely under observance. It is in just this way that we are talking about the principality of legitimately constituted superiors and the debt owed them when we speak of the virtue of observance.⁴⁸ In this sense there is little difficulty appreciating the validity of the superiority to which the debt of reverence and subjection are due. It is a shared principality—shared either with the parents or with the state according to the particular office and work of this individual

44... ad eos qui sunt in dignitate constituti, pertinet gubicnare subditos. Gubernare autem est movere aliquos in debitum finem, . . . Omne autem movens habet excellentiam quamdam et virtutem supra id quod movetur. Unde oportet quod in eo qui est in dignitati constitutus, *primo* consideretur excellentia status cum quadam potestate in subditos; *secundo*, ipsum gubernationis officium. Ratione igitur excellentiae debetur ei honor, qui est quaedam recognitio excellentiae alicujus; ratione autem officii gubernationis, debetur ei cultus, qui in quodam obsequio consistit, dum, scilicet aliquis obedit eorum imperio, et vicem beneficiis eorum pro suo modo rependit. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102, a. 2.

48. . . personis in dignitate constitutis potest aliquid exhiberi dupliciter: uno modo in ordine ad bonum commune, puta cum aliquis eis servit in administratione reipublicae: et hoc jam non pertinet ad observantiam, sed ad pietatem, quae cultum exhibet non solum patri, sed etiam patriae. Alio modo exhibetur aliquid personis in dignitate constitutis pertinens specialiter ad personalem eorum utilitate vel gloriam: et hoc proprie pertinet ad observantiam secundum quod a pietate distinguitur. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102, a. 3.

superior—and partakes of the same character of a debt beyond our power to pay. All that was said, then, of religion, piety, and patriotism, carefully preserving the proper proportion of a steadily diminishing principality, must be said of the virtue of observance in regard to those constituted in authority. It hardly seems necessary to repeat those details again in this paper, particularly if it is kept in mind that all these virtues are concerned with a fundamental order, and that their absence means chaos in the particular field of action proper to each virtue.

The debt owed to the learned and virtuous is, however, another matter. St. Thomas himself insisted that such pre-eminence did not give one man principality over another, as we have noted on the preceding page. It might be argued that excellence in learning and knowledge, in whomever it is found, is a kind of principle to others by way of inspiration and emulation moving other men to greater efforts. St. Thomas seems to suggest that this excellence in learning and virtue makes men potentially constituted in authority,⁴⁴ though he does not press the point as the basis for honor and reverence to these people; he merely uses this as an explanation of why he reduces such honor and reverence to the virtue of observance.

The real reason why men incur a debt to the virtuous and learned is not because of the principality they enjoy over other men, but simply because virtue and learning are things for which no payment can be made. The implication plainly made here is that such excellence is a boon to those who haven't got it, as well as a perfection of those who have.⁴⁷ In this light,

⁴⁴ “Yet, forasmuch as science, virtue and all like things render a man fit for positions of dignity, the respect which is paid to anyone on account of any excellence whatever belongs to the same virtue.” (Verum, quia per scientiam et virtutem, et omnia alia hujusmodi aliquis idoneus redditur ad dignitatis statum, reverentia quae propter quamcumque excellentiam aliquibus exhibetur, ad eandem virtutem pertinet.) *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. UH, a. 1, ad ium.

⁴⁷ “It belongs to special justice, properly speaking, to pay the equivalent to those to whom we owe any thing. Now this cannot be done to the virtuous, and to those who make good use of their position of dignity, as neither can it be done to God, nor to our parents.” (. . . ad justitiam specialem proprie sumptam pertinet reddere

observance furnishes a fundamental principle of order to the social life of men. It is *highly* unlikely that we shall ever meet a man who is inferior to us in every way; that is, in every man there will be some title to superiority on the basis of which he has just claim to the payment we reserve for unpayable debts, namely, honor and reverence, with a certain amount of *subjection*. It is worth noting that there is no question here of mineral, plant, or animal excellence in our neighbors; but of excellence of mind and will, the distinctively spiritual excellencies. Contempt for men, then, would necessarily involve an inversion of the social order possible only in a condition of blindness that would obscure all of another man's excellency.



Primary Act of Religion—Devotion (Religious Morale)

These household virtues of religion, piety, patriotism, and observance are the virtues which attend to the orderly management of a man's life with God, with his family, with his fellow citizens, and with his fellow men. As virtues, they are good habits which, therefore, exist for the acts which spring from them. As we have seen, all of them have both internal and external acts, of which the external exist for the internal acts.

aequale ei cui aliquid debetur. Quod quidem non potest fieri ad virtuosos cl ad eos qui bene statu dignitatis utuntur, sicut nec ad Deum, nec ad parentes.) *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102, a. 1, ad Sum.

“Wherefore in two ways may a virtue directed to another person fall short of the perfection of justice: first, by falling short of the aspect of equality; . . . For certain virtues there are which render another his due, but are unable to render equal due. In the first place, whatever man renders to God is due, yet it cannot be equal. . . . Secondly, it is not possible to make to one's parents an equal return. . . . Thirdly . . . man is unable to offer an equal meed for virtue. . . .” (Dupl-citer ergo aliqua virtus ad alterum existens a ratione justitiae deficit a ratione aequalis; uno modo, in quantum deficit a ratione debiti. Sunt enim quaedam virtutes quae debitum quidem alteri reddunt, sed non possunt reddere aequale. Et primo quidem quidquid ab homine Deo redditur, debitum est, non tamen potest esse aequale . . . Secundo, parentibus non potest secundum aequalitatem recompensari. . . . Tertio, non potest secundum aequale praemium recompensari ab homine virtus. . . .) *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 80, a. unie.

Among these internal acts, one will be first. This one act, then, is the immediate reason for the existence of the virtue and for all the other acts of the virtue; in the analysis of that one act, we have the quintessence of the virtue and all its activity.

We have seen the ordered interrelation of these virtues; they begin with religion and descend in a gradual scale proportioned to the gradually diminishing participation in the principality that in its fullness is proper to God. What is said of one of them can be said of all the others, keeping the proper proportion of the principles to which they make payment on an unpayable debt. This same thing, then, will be true of the acts of these virtues, and particularly of the first act to which all others are ordered; what can be said, for instance, of the first act of religion can also be said of the first act of piety, of patriotism, and of observance—always keeping the proper proportion of these virtues. If, then, we can obtain a sharp, accurate knowledge of the first act of religion, we have the key to the secret of the orderly management of all man's relations with others: with God, with family, with country, with fellow men.

This first act of religion is called devotion.⁴⁸

Devotion comes from the idea of dedication and those were called devout or devoted who in some way dedicated themselves to God so as to be utterly His. Therefore devotion is nothing other than promptitude of will in those things that concern the worship of God. Since it is evident that this is a special act, it follows that devotion is a special act of the will.⁴⁰

“An exhaustive study of the texts of St. Thomas to trace the development of his thought on devotion can be found in “The Thomistic Concept of Devotion.” by John W. Curran, O.P., *The Thomist*, Vol. II, no. 3 & 4 (July, 1940 and October, 1940). This study is of considerable importance, for St. Thomas' solution of the problem of devotion is one of his strikingly original contributions to theological thought.

4i Devotio dicitur a devovendo: unde devoti dicuntur qui seipsos quodammodo Deo devovent ut ei se totaliter subdant; . . . Unde devotio nihil aliud esse videtur quam voluntas quaedam prompte tradendi se ad ea quae pertinent ad Dei famulatum. . . . Manifestum est autem quod voluntas prompte faciendi quod ad Dei servitium pertinet, est quidem specialis actus. Unde devotio est specialis actus voluntatis.” *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. I.

Devotion is the net of the will by which man offers himself to God to serve Him Who is the ultimate end.⁰⁰

We are not far wrong in the use of the word in its adjectival form, speaking of a devout prayer, a devoted wife, a devoted patriot, devoted children; for in all of these cases we are emphasizing the reverence, honor and subjection that is expressed in particularly willing service.

Devotion is the first and most important act of religion. The internal acts, as we have seen, are the most important acts of religion; of these there are just two, namely, devotion and prayer. Devotion is the more important of these two.

The will moves the other powers of the soul to its end, . . . and therefore religion, which is in the will, directs the acts of the other powers to the reverence of God. Now among the other powers of the soul the intellect is the highest, and the nearest to the will; and consequently after devotion which belongs to the will, prayer which belongs to the intellective part is the chief of the acts of religion, since by it religion directs man's intellect to God.⁰¹

It is easy to understand the importance of the key position of devotion if we follow the three immediate implications of its source in the will of man. It subjects the will of the creature to the Creator; the whole will, for devotion has no other material than willing to offer. Now the whole moral life of a man is successful or unsuccessful according to the nod his will gives to virtue or to vice; the consent of the will is, by devotion, given to the service of God. Thus, the whole moral life of a man is offered in the act of devotion/² We must be careful here not to identify devotion with its heroic degree, just as we must not

80. . . devotio sit actus voluntatis hominis offerentis seipsum Deo ad ei servendum, qui est ultimus finis, . . . *Ibid.*, ad lum.

81. . . voluntas movet alias potentias animae in suum finem, . . . et ideo religio, quae est in voluntate, ordinat actus aliarum potentiarum ad Dei reverentiam. Inter alias autem potentias animae intellectus altior est, et voluntati propinquior; et ideo post devotionem, quae perlinet ad ipsam voluntatem, oratio quae pertinet ad partem intellectivam, est praecipua inter actus religionis, per quam religio intellectum hominis movet in Deum. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 83, a. 3, ad lum.

82 Curran, "The Thomistic Concept of Devotion," *The Thomist*, II, 4, p. 554, 574, 578.

identify charity with heroic sanctity. Any degree of devotion offers the whole will of man to the service of God, as any degree of charity loves God above all things; and devotion is, in fact, found in beginners and the imperfect, as also is true charity.

Devotion not only offers the whole will, it offers a prompt will. Devotion offers the will itself to God. “ And since it is impossible to conceive of sluggishness in such an offering, a special promptitude is to be found in devotion,” not as a mere accidental mode of the act of devotion, but as part and parcel of that act.

Finally, devotion stamps a mode upon every other act of religion, and every other act that is ordered to the service of God.

The mover prescribes the mode of the movement of the thing moved. Now the will moves the other powers of the soul to their acts, and the will, in so far as it regards the end, moves both itself and whatever is directed to the end. . . . Wherefore, since devotion is an act of the will whereby a man offers himself for the service of God Who is the last end, it follows that devotion prescribes the mode to human acts, whether they be acts of the will itself about things directed to the end, or acts of the other powers that are moved by the will.⁵⁴

The mode imposed by devotion on every other act of religion is that of prompt, even eager, service.

Obviously, then, devotion is not to be detected by touch, sight or smell; the “ odor of sanctity ” is a purely metaphorical description. This act of religion is an act of the will; not a matter of emotion. Without it there are no acts of religion: the payments on the unpayable debt of religion are made with prompt will or they are not made at all. This act of devotion is

M Ibid., pp, 576, 577.

“ . . . movens imponit modum motui mobilis. Voluntas autem movet alias vires anime ad suos actus; et voluntas secundum quod est finis, movet seipsam ad ea quae sunt ad finem. . . . Et ideo cum devotio sit actus voluntatis hominis offerentis seipsum Deo ad ei serviendum, qui est ultimus finis, consequens est quod devotio imponat modum humanis actibus, sive sint actus ipsius voluntatis circa ea quae sunt ad finem, sive etiam sint actus aliarum potentiarum, quae a voluntate moventur. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 1, ad lum.

the core of man's religious life; that life stands or falls with the presence or absence of devotion.

This act of devotion in its highest degree is what we mean by the human side of religious vocation. This eager will to serve God, carried to the length of stripping oneself of all else that the service might be complete, is what we mean when we say that this person has a vocation. This is the thing to be fostered, protected, nourished for the good of the Church and the welfare of men. This is religious morale in its highest form. To know the causes of devotion, to be aware of the threats to it and the impediments that hinder it, is to be in a position to work most effectively in the cause of vocations.

God is the principal and extrinsic cause of this all-important act of devotion. Nevertheless, there is much to be done on our side, both by way of causing devotion and by way of removing the impediments to it. Considering the fundamental importance of devotion for all of a man's religious and moral life, the concrete determination of our possibilities in its production is worthy of the most careful consideration.

First of all, we can, obviously, prepare ourselves.

It belongs to a virtuous man not only to make good use of his matter or instrument, but also to prepare opportunities for that good use.⁶⁵

He that prepares not his soul before prayer by forgiving those against whom he has anything, or in some other way disposing himself to devotion, docs not do what he can to be heard by God, wherefore he tempts God implicitly as it were. And though this implicit temptation would seem to arise from presumption or indiscretion, yet the very fact that a man behaves presumptuously and without due care in matters relating to God implies irreverence towards Him.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Ad virtuosum pertinet non solum convenienter uti sua materia vel instrumento, sed etiam praeparare opportunitates ad bene utendum; . . . *Summa Theol.*, 11-11. q. 117, a. 3, ad 2um.

⁶⁶ Ille qui ante orationem animam suam non praeparat, dimittendo quid adversum aliquam habet, vel alias ad devotionem se non disponendo, non facit quod in se est, ut exaudiatur a Deo; et ideo quasi interpretative tentât Deum. Et quamvis hujusmodi interpretativa tentatio videatur ex praesumptione seu indiscretionem pro-

Our preparation, in other words, must at least connut in removing the impediments to devotion. Where there is no concrete impediment, there still must be some positive preparation for this first and all-important act of religion.

Among the impediments mentioned, just in passing, by St. Thomas are all those inferior things that enmesh the mind of man and debase it,⁶⁷ since without purity the mind cannot be applied to God. Then, too, there is the consideration of all foreign matters that distract the mind from things that are apt to awaken the love of God within us.*' Perhaps some of the most powerful impediments to devotion are to be found in those things that contribute, at least in their disordered state, to self-sufficiency and presumption.

Science, and anything else conducive to greatness, is to man an occasion of self-confidence, so that he does not wholly surrender himself to God. The result is that such-like things sometimes occasion a hindrance to devotion; while in simple souls and women devotion abounds by repressing pride.⁵⁰

With these impediments eliminated, we are ready, on our side, to put the positive causes of devotion to work. One of these is, of course, love.

. . . charity both causes devotion (inasmuch as love makes one prompt to serve one's friend) and feeds on devotion. Even as all friendship is safeguarded and increased by the practice and consideration of friendly deeds.⁶⁰

venire, tamcn hoc ipsum nd irreverentiam Dei pertinet quod homo praesumptuose et sine debita diligentia sc habeat in his quae ad Deum pertinent. *Summa Thcol*[^] II-II, q. 97, a. 3, ad Sum.

BTSumma Thcol., II-II, q. 81, a. 8 corp. vid. *supra*, footnote IS.

“. . . the consideration of anything whatsoever that does not pertain to things apt to awaken our love of God but distracts our mind from them impedes devotion (consideratio quorumcumque ad hoc non pertinentium, sed ab eis mentem distrahentium, impedit devotionem.) *Summa Thcol.* II-II. q. Si, a. 3. ad lum.

· Scientia et quidquid aliud ad magnitudinem pertinet, occasio est quod homo confidat de seipso; et ideo non totaliter se Deo tradat. Et inde est quod huiusmodi quandoque occasionaliter devotionem impediunt; et in simplicibus et mulieribus devotio abundat, elationem comprimendo. *Summa Thcol.* II-II. q. Si, a. S. ad Sum.

*°. . . caritas et devotionem causât, in quantum ex amore aliquis redditur

. . . this consideration (of God's goodness) awakens love which is the proximate cause of devotion.⁰¹

The root cause of devotion, however, from the aspect of our part in it, is meditation. The matter is so important that we had better let St. Thomas talk for himself at some length.

But the intrinsic cause on our part must needs be meditation or contemplation. For it was slated above that devotion is an act of the will to the effect that man surrenders himself promptly to the service of God. Now every act of the will proceeds from some consideration. since the object of the will is a good understood. . . . Consequently meditation must needs be the cause of devotion, in so far as through meditation man conceives the thought of surrendering himself to God's service. Indeed a twofold consideration leads him thereto. The one is the consideration of God's goodness and loving kindness . . . and this consideration awakens love which is the proximate cause of devotion. The other consideration is that of man's own shortcomings, on account of which he needs to lean on God . . . and this consideration shuts out presumption whereby man is hindered from submitting to God. because he leans on his own strength.⁰²

Matters concerning the Godhead are, in themselves, the strongest incentive to love and consequently to devotion, because God is supremely lovable. Yet such is the weakness of the human mind that it needs a guiding hand, not only to the knowledge, but also

promptus ad serviendum amico, et etiam per devotionem charitas nutritur; sicut et quaelibet amicitia conservatur et augetur per amicabilium operum exercitium et meditationem. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 2, ad 2um.

*x. . . haec consideratio excitat dilectionem, quae est proxima devotionis causa. *Ibid.*, a. 8, corp.

“Causa autem intrinseca ex parte nostra oportet quod sit meditatio seu contemplatio. Dictum est enim art. 1 huj. quaest. quod devotio est quidam voluntatis actus ad hoc quod homo prompte se tradat ad divinum obsequium. Omnis autem actus voluntatis ex aliqua consideratione procedit, eo quod bonum intellectum est objectum voluntatis. . . . Et ideo necesse est quod meditatio sit devotionis causa, in quantum scilicet homo per meditationem concipit quod se tradat divino obsequio. Ad quod quidem inducit duplex consideratio: una quidem quae est ex parte divinae bonitatis et beneficiorum ipsius . . . et haec consideratio excitat dilectionem, quae est proxima devotionis causa. Alia vero est ex parte hominis considerantis suos defectus, ex quibus indiget ut Deo innitatur . . . ; et haec consideratio excludit praesumptionem, per quam aliquis impeditur ne Deo se subiciat, dum suae virtuti innititur. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 3.

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 known to ut ('hit ! among these is the I ()
 ing to the words of the Preface, *that through knowing God's love we may be caught up to the love of thing invisible*. Wherefore matters relating to Christ's humanity art thi chief inceni v< to devotion, lending us thither ns n guiding hand, although devotion itself hns for its object matters concerning the Godhead/*

Meditation, then, from our side is the principal cause of devotion. It is to be noticed that St. Thomas has not made an exhaustive nor exclusive statement of the material for the meditation which leads to devotion; he has done no more than lay down the most general principles. From these principles, the world itself is laid open as a book for our meditation: anything that pertains to the goodness of God, to His loving kindness, and (though Thomas took this as obvious after all that was said on the virtue of religion and its object) anything that pertains to the excellence of the first principle. On the other hand, all that pertains to the defects of man will also lead to devotion to one who carefully considers them. By way of example, St. Thomas >ay> that the very things that are an occasion of impeding devotion can be a cause of its increase: "If a man perfectly subjects his knowledge, or any other perfection whatever, to God, from that very fact, his devotion is increased." The strong language of St. Thomas makes the formidable conclusion inescapable: without meditation there can be no devotion.

>X< >X< >X< >X< >X< >X<

"Ea quae sunt Divinitatis, sunt secundum se maxime excitantia dilectionem, et igitur consequens devotionem, quia Deus est super omnia diligendus; sed ex debilitate mentis humanae est quod sicut indiget manu ductionem ad cognitionem divinarum, ita ad dilectionem per aliqua sensibilia nobis nota: inter quae praecipuum est humanitas Christi, secundum quod in Praefatione dicitur. *Ita, scilicet, in Wifariae doctrinae cognoscimus, per hunc in invisibilium amorem rapiamur*. Et ideo ea quae periment ad Christi humanitatem, per modum cujusdam manu ductionis, maxime deus meo excitant; cum tamen devotio principaliter circa ea quae sunt Divinitatis consistat *Ibid.*, ad tum.

e"Si tamen scientiam et quamcumque aliam perfectionem homo perferte Deo subdat, ex hoc ipso devotio augetur. Summa *Theol.*, II-II. q. St, a 3 ad Sum

WALTER FARRELL

Primary Act of Piety—Domestic Devotion (Domestic Morale)

We have seen the exact parallel and the intimate interdependence of the virtues that deal with the settlement of unpayable debts—*religion, piety, patriotism, and observance*. They are arranged in a *descending grade*, with a steadily more limited held; but so *exactly* parallel that what is said of one can be said of *another, keeping* in mind the difference in the field of each virtue. This same thing is, obviously, also true of the principal act of each of these virtues. All of them demand reverence and *subjection to* principles of being and operation; and that reverence and subjection is primarily in the will of men. “It belongs to the same virtue to will to do something, and to have the will prompt to do it, because both acts have the same object.”¹⁶ From this, St. Thomas concludes that devotion is an act of religion; it can be as validly concluded that each of these household virtues has a parallel act of devotion which can be accurately described from the detailed description St. Thomas has already given of religious devotion.

To escape the dangers of ambiguity, let us use the word “*morale*” instead of “*devotion*” to describe the first act of each of these virtues; thus, we shall talk of religious morale, domestic or filial morale, patriotic morale, and social morale. We are now in a position to delineate in detail what Thomas makes clear only in principle concerning the acts of these virtues under religion.

Domestic or filial morale, then, is the prompt will to give oneself to the service of parents. It effects both the reverence of parents and the subjection of children in one and the same act of veneration or service. It is a matter of order, putting both children and parents in their proper place in the family hierarchy; a matter of honesty, the payment of a debt due to the parents as principles of being and government—and this in-

¹⁶... ad eandem virtutem pertinet velle facere aliquid, et promptam voluntatem habere ad illud faciendum, quia utriusque actus est idem objectum. *Stnmu Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 2. Confer *ibid.*, q. 81, a. 1, ad 3um; q. 101, a. 1; q. 102, a. 1.

VIRTUE OF THE HOUSEHOLD

chides generation, education, discipline, and all things that pertain to the perfection of human life; M a matter of privilege, for it is precisely in this subjection to a superior that the child himself perfected.

This domestic morale is the first act of the virtue of piety. From it, and through it, all other acts that pertain to, or are ordered to, the family must flow; and this under pain of there being no family acts at all. Domestic morale puts its stamp of promptitude on all other moral acts pertaining to the family, marking them with a mode of willingness that is proper to domestic morale and shared by all other family acts; for it is the mover to the ends of the family, and its characteristics are the characteristics of all motion to the family goals.

Mon ox ' i. all other famib . both inti exist for the sustenance and increase of this family morale. It is internal and first; all external acts are ordered to the internal, and all internal acts ordered to the first internal act. The obedience, respect, courtesy and so on which is demanded of children in the name of piety, in fact all that pertains to the perfection of the child's life, are not for show, not for the gratification of the parents, but for the domestic morale which is piety's act of devotion; ultimately, then, for the reverence of parents through the perfection of the child in its inner act of domestic morale.

Domestic morale is caused by love and causes love. It is, above all, brought about through meditation (or loxing thought) on the excellence of the parents as principles, on the initial and enduring dependence of the child on the parents, and on all things that reveal or emphasize either this excellence or this dependence. It is caused and increased by a conscientious preparation for family acts, and particularly for this supreme act of domestic morale. Its impediments will be all base things that enslave the mind and heart of man. things beneath the level and dignity of the family; for purity is an essential for the consideration of such superior things as the principles of our

being and government. *It will be impeded by any exaggeration of the child's independence; and everything that contributes to the glorification of the child's own capacities can easily be an occasion of the presumption that nullifies the possibility of domestic morale.* What lowers the child's estimation of his parents will certainly undermine, if not destroy, domestic morale. And this *domestic* morale will be seriously hindered by all that distracts the mind from the fundamental considerations of parental excellence and filial subjection; things, for instance, like a home that for most of the time has nobody in it, extremes of amusement, activities outside the home, or ceaseless activity within the home. Domestic morale demands, and cultivates, a certain firmness and stability, for it swings around the principles of being and government.



Primary Act of Patriotism—Patriotic Devotion

(Patriotic Morale)

The same body of truth that has been established concerning religious devotion is applicable, with the proper limitations, to the first act of the virtue of patriotism, patriotic devotion or patriotic morale. **It** is the prompt will to serve one's country. **It** is the very first act of the virtue of patriotism, the first and fundamental subjection that fixes a man's proper place, establishing the hierarchy of patriotism. With this act order is established and continued; inferior things cannot usurp places above men, men can know **their** rights and their duties. **It**, too, is a matter of order, of honesty which makes payment on an unpayable debt, and of privilege, perfecting the citizen by the very subjection to a superior. **It** recognizes one's country as a principle of being and of government; in that recognition there is implied the reverence for excellence and the subjection to principality which make up the essence of the honor due to one's country.

It is the first and most fundamental act of the virtue of

patriotism. From it, all other acts that pertain to or are ordered to one's country must flow; and all other acts, internal or external, are ordered to and exist for this internal act of patriotism: morale. We have made much of civil obedience, of military service, of political duties, and rightly so. Yet, in emphasizing these things, it must not be overlooked that their absence is much more damaging to the delinquent citizen than it is to the country; for all these external things are for the internal act of patriotic morale which perfects the individual citizen.

Morale building, then, in the sense of patriotic morale, is not really a mysterious affair. Love of country will cause patriotic morale, and will be caused by patriotic morale; but the two are not so closely tied together as to be inextricable. Love is not the spring from which patriotic morale flows; its reverence and subjection are due to the country under the precise aspect of a principle of being and government. It is not unusual to find an intense patriotic morale in men who have been very badly treated by their country; whatever the treatment received, it still remains true that this country is a principle of their being and government.

The immediate and most direct cause of patriotic morale from our side is meditation, reiterated consideration of the excellence of that principle of our being and its consequent superiority in that limited field, and our dependence on and subjection to it. Immersion in baser things, in interests inimical to country, or beneath the dignity of patriotic thought is certainly an impediment to the development of patriotic morale: for without purity, men cannot apply their minds to superior things. What lowers our country and its leaders in our estimation is a definite impediment to morale, undermining our estimation of their excellence; it should be a grave threat indeed to the common good that would justify revelation of things that go far to impede patriotic morale. Again, what tends to exaggerate our independence of our country, in the political field in which we depend on it, is again hindrance to political morale, fostering a political presumption that is basically false.

Then, too, there must be some preparation of soul for the placing of patriotic acts, particularly of the first act which is patriotic morale. And there must be a certain firmness or *stability on the* part of the citizens in this matter, since they are here dealing with things as enduring and immobile as principles.

A nation that attempts to exist without patriotic morale, i. e., without the first act of patriotism, is hoping for the impossible; in fact, it is to all practical purposes already dead. Where patriotic morale is at a low ebb, that is, where this first act of patriotism is a lukewarm, flaccid thing, the country will be disordered, dishonest, and debasing to its citizens. A semblance of external order might be kept by a reign of terror, and for a short time; but the fundamental principles of order have been disregarded. Here there is no place for a man; and so, no place for his superiors or his inferiors. There is no hope for justice where the fundamental debts of the citizens are denied. There is none of the perfecting action of discipline. The external acts won by paternal bribery or terroristic brutality are by no stretch of the imagination ordered to the perfection of the individual citizen. This is a nation which is the enemy of its citizens, and whose citizens are everyone an enemy of the nation.



Primary Act of Observance—Social Devotion (Social Morale)

Social morale, the first act of the virtue of observance, has the same role to play in the relationship of individual men that domestic morale plays in the family and patriotic morale in the state. It furnishes the foundation of mutual respect among men, recognizing and respecting superiority of virtue and learning, and the universal scope of men's varying excellencies. It, too, demands purity, abstraction of mind from baser things, and a certain stability. It, too, springs from love and causes love; it, too, demands meditation on the excellencies of men and the subjection of ourselves. It is a matter of order, of honesty, and of the privilege of perfection. Without it, men are enemies.

No surer confirmation of this need be sought than the tragic effectiveness of the tale-bearer and the gossip who focus men's minds, not on the excellencies of men, but on their deficiencies; of the braggart who focuses his attention on his own excellencies and blinds himself to his inferiority to other men better in one way or another. A veneer of civilization may hide this enmity of man to man for a time; but it is not possible to make fundamental disorder appear orderly. All other acts pertaining to or ordered to the social life of men must flow from and be ordered to this social morale, which imprints its eager stamp on every act in the properly ordered social life of men. It is a prompt will to serve men, recognizing the just grounds of that service and perfecting itself in that recognition.

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Conclusion

Before concluding this brief study, one more implication of its investigation of the virtues of service should be pointed out, that is, the very close interdependence of these virtues in a gradually descending scale. Piety hangs from religion as the superiority of parents hangs from their share in the principality of God; patriotism hangs from piety and religion; observance from religion, piety, and patriotism. Obviously, if religion is cut off at the top of this chain, the rest will not hang in mid-air; if the debt due to God is denied, the shared debt due to others will hardly be taken seriously. The collapse of morale in our time has its fundamental causes; it will not be stayed by superficial remedies.

The obvious conclusion of this study has been the identification of religious vocation, on its human side, with an intense act of devotion, the primary act of the virtue of religion. And the recognition of the first act of the virtue of patriotism as that mysterious thing which the moderns identified vaguely as "morale" has been seen as nothing other than patriotic devo

WALTER FARRELL

tion, an act of virtue to be cultivated through the cultivation of the virtue.

In the course of this double clarification, much has been said of all the virtues of the *household*, the virtues dedicated to the service of *others* in payment on unpayable debts: the virtues of religion, piety, patriotism, and observance with their proper acts. There is still much to learn about these virtues and the morale which is their first and fundamental act. Indeed, this *study has been hardly more* than an opening up of horizons for further and much more profound thinking on the household virtues *through the* explicit statement of what St. Thomas left implicit in his treatment of these virtues. The further implications of such an explicit statement are so vast as to furnish abundant material for profound and extensive study. That further study must, however, be left to other and more capable *hands*.

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WAYS TO KNOW GOD

THE "SYMBOLIC THEOLOGY" OF DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE AND ITS FACTUAL PRESUPPOSITIONS*

I. *Preparatory Considerations*

1. *The Areopagitica*. One may distinguish three main spiritual currents which powerfully fashioned Western men-

! The author, Sister Theresia Benedicta a Cruce, **OCD**, who in the world wa* Dr, Edith Stein, mailed the manuscript of this article to Professor Msna Farter, the editor of the *Journal of Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, in the fall of 1911, Prof Farber submitted it to the present translator for use ax>d publication. Since then no reliable information has been obtainable on the fate the author suffered. She had left the Carmelite convent at Lindenthal-Gologae and found refuge in the convent of Echt in Holland. Because of her Jewish descent cither she was forced to leave Germany or it was considered prudent to hare her leave. It has been reported, by apparently reliable sources, that she wa* later arrested by the Germans and put in a concentration camp in Poland, where the is said to have died, presumably being killed. But no definite confirmation of this has reached this country. On Dr Stein's previous work in philosophy and her intellectual and religious development, see the article by J Collins. "Edith Sten and the Adxance of Phenomenology," *Thought*, 1942, **XVH**, 6Si; also "The Fate of Edith Stein," *ibid.*, 1943, **XVIII**, 324.

The study presented here is obviously intended as a sort of introduction to further investigations into the problem indicated by the title. Whether any *cl* these studies are extant we do not know; a great work on ontology, to which the author referred in a letter to Professor Farber of the same date as this manuscript, was completed. The printing of it, however, was forbidden by the German authorities; the fate of the book is unknown at the present time. This information is owed to the courtesy of Professor Farber.

The reader acquainted with Husserl's phenomenology will recognize his influence in the present article. It seems to have been the intention of the author to make use of certain ideas, dexeloped within Husserl's school, for the elucidation of metaphysical and theological problems. Her having grown up, as it were, in the atmosphere of phenomenology*—she was for many years Professor Husserl's assistant—causes the author to use a certain technical language the rendering of which into English is not always easy. It has been the endeavor of the translator to avoid such technicalities as far as possible, so as to make the text intelligible to those not acquainted with this particular branch of contemporary philosophy. Anyone who wishes to know more about it should consult Marvin Farber's *as a Method and as a Philosophical Discipline*. Buffalo. 192\$. Although there remain certain passages in connection with which some explanation or comment might be desirable, the translator has refrained from adding anything to the original text. R. Allers.