

THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CURRENT PROBLEMS

FUNDAMENTAL AND DOGMA

1. *Clarification of the Concept of Theological Qualifications.* So many authors, so many textbooks, have their own private systems of "notes," their own interpretations of the meaning of qualifications such as "*theologicæ certæ*," "*proxima fidei*," etc. Would it be possible to put some sort of unity into this confusing diversity? Cf. the recent work on the subject by Sixtus Cartechini, S.J., *De Valore Notarum Theologicarum* (Rome, 1951).

2. *The Mystical Body as the Immolated Victim in the Mass.* An explanation is desirable of the words of Pius XII in *Menti nostræ*: ". . . sacrificium, quod Divinus Redemptor e cruce pendens in Calvariae monte obtulit, non sui proprii corporis tantummodo immolatio fuit. . . . Idem profecto in Eucharistico sacrificio contingit. . . . Christus . . . non modo semet ipsum, sed christianos universos et quodam modo omnes etiam homines offert et immolat" (*AAS*, XLIV [1950], 666).

3. *The Apologetical Approach to the Modern Mind.* In practical apologetics, must the customary logical approach be supplanted or at least supplemented by the psychological? Who is "the enemy" in our day? What mentalities are to be met with? What has experience disclosed to be the best approach? Peripheral problem: what can be done in the seminary to supplement scientific apologetics with the popular or practical? Cf. C. Ryan, O.P., "The Apologetic Problem Today," *Blackfriars*, XXXIII (Oct., 1952), 421-28.

4. *Critical Appraisal of De la Taille's Created Actuation by Uncreated Act.* Cf. M. de la Taille, "Actuation Créée par Acte Incréé," *Rech. de sc. rel.*, XVIII (1928), 253-68; W. R. O'Connor, "A New Concept of Grace and the Supernatural," *Eccl. Rev.*, XCVIII (1938), 401-13; P. de Letter, S.J., "Sanctifying Grace and Our Union with the Holy Trinity," *Theological Studies*, XIII (1952), 33 ff., and the literature there noted.

5. *The Theology of Modalities with respect to the Sacraments.* This would involve a thoroughgoing discussion of the radical distinc-

tion between the modes of grace caused by the several sacraments; a deeper penetration into the significance of sacramental grace. [The topic was suggested by Father Ferrer Smith, O.P., and elicited unusual enthusiasm from the Committee members.]

6. *Eastern Orthodox Theology.* (1) Theology of the Russian Orthodox Church; cf. the School at Fordham U. (2) Theology of the Greek Orthodox Church, e.g., epiclesis, purgatory, privileges of BVM, etc. It was felt that the CTSA might do well to make Orthodox thought more prominent in its discussions than has been the case heretofore.

7. *The Structure of Participation in the Theology of St. Thomas.* Much recent work by philosophers on certain Neoplatonic elements in Thomas' philosophy; cf. summary in A. Little, S.J., "The Platonic Heritage of Thomism"; W. N. Clark, S.J., "The Limitation of Act by Potency," *New Scholasticism* (April, 1952). Several theological problems ought to be solved: (1) the participation doctrine relative to grace, charity, the infused virtues, etc.; (2) possible sources of St. Thomas in the Neoplatonist Fathers; (3) the doctrine of participation as a possible key to the solution of contemporary disagreements such as between the "metaphysical" theologians and the "devotional," as found in various approaches to the Mass, liturgy, marriage, etc.

8. *Theology and the Physical Sciences.* (1) Role of logic in theology. (2) Role of dialectical reasoning in theology. (3) First proof for God's existence in the light of modern logic, semantics, symbolic logic; in the light of modern physics. (4) The Allocution of Pius XII: modern science and the existence of God. (5) Role of the angels in the physical universe. (6) St. Thomas' tract (I, qq. 65-74) on corporeal creation in the light of modern science.

ASCETICAL

9. *Personal Salvation and Selfishness.* Is personal salvation incompatible with unselfishness? To what extent is "selfishness" licit, advisable, tolerable, inevitable, with respect to personal salvation? Must we rephrase the purpose one may have in entering religious life or the priesthood ("to save my soul"), so as to avoid the implication of selfishness?

10. *Contemplation as the Normal Development of the Life of Grace and the Virtues.* Briefly: a discussion of Garrigou-Lagrange's thesis. It was suggested that this might be presented to better advantage as a "debate," with a theologian on each side of the fence. Names mentioned in this latter connection were: J. R. Gillis, O.P., of River Forest, Ill.; Sebastian Carlson, O.P., and R. Aumann, O.P., both of Dubuque; R. Eiten, S.J., who wrote "Recent Theological Opinion on Infused Contemplation," *Theol. Stud.*, II (1941), 89 ff. [Chairman's note: It is my belief that Father Eiten has been ill and is now convalescing in Phoenix, Ariz.; hence unavailable for any such discussion.]

11. *A Theological Appraisal of "Spiritual Slavery."* As applied to Jesus and Mary, first used by de Berulle (1621); work in which term appeared was censured by theologians of Douai and Louvain; word and concept defended subsequently by de Berulle in *Grandeurs de Jésus*, continued to be used in school of theology he founded, and found a place in writings of Eudes and de Montfort. Propriety questioned in 1946 by Cordovani, Master of the Sacred Palace; causes discomfort and leads to excesses in preaching. A paper should investigate whether one may be a "slave" of Jesus and Mary, and under what conditions; might also evaluate the total consecration of de Montfort relative to the abnegation of merit and satisfaction. Cf. M. Cordovani, O.P., "Concezioni berulliane e critica thomistica," *Acta pont. acad. S. Thomae Aquin* (1946), p. 156.

12. *Formation of Spiritual Directors.* Reference was made to an article which appeared several years ago in *Collectanea spiritualia* (Rome: Gregorian U.).

MORAL, CANON LAW, *Ius Publicum*

13. *The Right of Religious Dissent in Civil Society.* Pointed up by the recent occurrences in Colombia, the incident of the Churches of Christ in Rome, the remarks of Cardinal Segura. Would investigate (1) in general, the rights of ALL dissenters in ANY political set-up; (2) esp. the rights of majorities and minorities under specific forms of government, such as, e.g., democracy. Naturally, special attention should be paid to situations like the rights of Protestants in Italy, the rights of Catholics in the U. S. The "right" involved is

to be understood not as a purely legal thing but from the moral point of view. The problem of "subjective" or "objective" (which is to be treated?) might well be left to the discretion of the theologian chosen to handle the subject.

14. *The Claims of Catholics in Distributive Justice to Educational Aid.* Would deal specifically with the rights of parochial schools to public assistance; claims of justice vs. points suggested by the decisions of the Supreme Court; the claims a citizen may make in distributive justice; (2) historical conspectus of aid to Church schools in various countries; (3) contemporary American set-up according to the law of the land, Supreme Court decisions, etc.; (4) conclusion: what can we claim from the state in justice? Auxiliary services only? More?

15. *The Concept of Servile Work.* Origin of the concept; present-day interpretation; suggestions for clarification or possible modification of the concept.

16. *The Obligation of Married Couples to Procreate.* Suggested for seminar discussion; good starting point would be the article of Father Gerald Kelly, S.J., several months ago in *America*.

17. *The Right of the State to Legislate on Marriage.* This topic is given actuality by the restrictions placed on GI's in Europe, especially in the light of certain moral implications and consequences, e.g., illegitimacy, danger of promiscuity. Do these circumstances modify what might otherwise be regarded as prudent U. S. practice? Suggested for seminar.

18. *Detraction in Public Life.* (1) "McCarthyism": the morality of overstating a case to achieve a good end; the whole problem of so-called "crude methods"; the use of innuendo and insinuation. The "public" aspect of a man in public service: does he cease, e.g., to have a "private" life? (2) Gossip-columnists: the moral obligations of people like Winchell, Danton Walker, Ed Sullivan, Hedda Hopper. (3) Indiscriminate reporting in the press of domestic problems. Allied problems: the right to a good name, and the obligation of restitution where reputation has been damaged.

19. *The Theological Demands of Peace.* What place does peace have in the hierarchy of values? Can peace, e.g., justify a stalemate war? What values may be sacrificed for the sake of peace?

20. *Recent Errors Concerning the Formation of a Christian Conscience in the "New Moral Theology."* The contemporary endeavor at a general revision of Christian ethics, so that morality is left to the individual conscience, becomes purely subjective; the "morality of the situation." Implications: art without morality, politics without morality, marriage without morality. Cf. *Periodica*, XLI (Sept., 1952), 183.

21. *Catholic Attendance at Public Schools.* Could theologians clarify the moral issues, and perhaps indicate some answers, with respect to the current controversy on "moral and spiritual values" as the answer to godlessness in the public school? What of the morality of attendance at schools which present all religions "objectively"?

22. *Theology and Psychiatry.* An exposition of the approaches being tried for an ultimate resolution of the relationships between theology and psychiatry. With Catholics like Father Van der Veldt, Dr. Odenwald, Dr. Allers, Dr. Strecker, etc., available, perhaps a round table on this subject could be arranged. Cf. also the article by André Snoeck, "Moral Reflections on Psychiatric Abreaction," *Theol. Stud.*, XIII (1952), 173 ff.

SUMMARY

(1) Of the topics listed above, the Committee respectfully urges that the following be given most consideration:

3. *The Apologetical Approach to the Modern Mind.*

5. *The Modalities of Sacramental Grace.*

13. *The Right of Religious Dissent in Civil Society.*

(2) Of the topics listed above, the Committee respectfully urges that the following be given more than ordinary consideration:

10. *Contemplation as the Normal Development of the Life of Grace.*

17. *The Right of the State to Legislate on Marriage.*

18. *Detraction in Public Life.*

20. *Recent Errors Concerning the Formation of a Christian Conscience.*

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