

THEOLOGY AND HIGHER EDUCATION

PRACTICALLY every Catholic who has attended our secondary schools has heard at some time or other the remark that "Theology is the Queen of the Sciences." Every graduate of a Catholic college has surely heard it. Any Catholic educator will agree to it. There are, in fact, fewer sayings to which more lip-service is paid in Catholic education. For several centuries now the overwhelming majority of those engaged in Catholic education have not been theologically minded, because they have not been theologically trained. They have been content enough to allow to theology her title of Queen of the Sciences, provided that their own minds and their own endeavors were not troubled with the problems of her majesty.

NATURE OF THE PROBLEM — CONTEMPORARY INTEREST

Theology has long been dormant and ineffectual in Catholic higher education. The "Queen" has been a "Sleeping Beauty" whose threatened awakening is causing no little stir in the very quarters that have long acknowledged her reign without having to fear her jurisdiction.

The first stirrings of theology as a force in Catholic higher education in this country were felt at a meeting of the National Catholic Alumnae Federation held in New York in October, 1939. At that meeting it was proposed by Very Rev. Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R., that courses in scientific theology be taught to Catholic undergraduates. This proposal touched off a long series of discussions about the advisability of this solution to the problems of higher religious education.

While the discussion was carried on in various journals and in the public forum as well, some people set quietly to work and put into practice the proposal to teach theology at the undergraduate level. An immediate obstacle was the lack of a suitable text, but one was provided by the appearance of *A Companion to the Summa*, by the late Very Rev. Walter Farrell, O.P., S.T.M. A sizeable number of colleges adopted this book as a text. Other courses were inaugurated, based on various theology texts in English or on notes com-

piled by the teachers. In 1945 the first Theological Institute for Sisters was begun at St. Xavier College in Chicago. Shortly thereafter, St. Mary's College at Notre Dame opened a School of Sacred Theology which granted higher degrees to qualified Sisters and laywomen. While Father Connell's proposal was being debated at the theoretical level, it was being tried in practice by increasing numbers.

THE ARGUMENTS FOR THEOLOGY

The early discussions turned on whether theology should be incorporated into the undergraduate curriculum. A number of distinguished theologians, almost all members of this Society, spoke for the affirmative and adduced arguments which have never been answered adequately by their opponents.

For the sake of completeness, a summary of some of the more salient arguments for theological courses in the undergraduate curriculum will be given here.

1. The immediate purpose of the undergraduate curriculum is to impart to the student by academic means a grasp of the principles of Christian wisdom by which he may shape his life and affect his environment according to the dictates of faith and reason. This requires an academic, orderly presentation of the truths of faith, which is best had in the divinely human wisdom of theology.

2. In disciplines like theology, which are susceptible of scientific communication, scientific presentation is objectively better than that which is non-scientific. Now undergraduates are capable of learning scientifically at a level proportionate to beginners, as is clear from the presentation of many secular subjects in our colleges. Undergraduates, therefore, should be afforded the best presentation of sacred doctrine commensurate with their capacities, and this is theology.

3. It is the vocation of the Christian layman to mediate between the spiritual and the temporal orders. For this function, a clear understanding of both orders is prerequisite. This understanding cannot be complete without at least a rudimentary grasp of the wisdom of theology which views and judges all reality in terms of its relation to God. Without the ability to judge reality according to its objective value in terms of its highest cause, the Christian will be unable to determine what changes are necessary in the temporal

order; nor will he have a clear vision of what spiritual means are to be employed in effecting the needed changes. Now the understanding of the realities of life and the ability to judge them in terms of the highest cause are the effects of the habit of the wisdom of theology. It follows, then, that the best academic preparation that can be had for the layman's vocation will be had only through a curriculum integrated by theology.

PURPOSE OF UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

A great deal of misunderstanding has arisen regarding the purpose or finality of theological courses for undergraduates. Most of this difficulty can be cleared up by reflecting on a few basic principles which must regulate the training of our collegians.

First of all, the problem of finality is academic rather than educational, for education and schooling are not coextensive terms. This vital distinction is clearly manifest in the encyclical *On the Christian Education of Youth*.

In that document, Catholic education is considered in one place as a perfection which the individual attains. Thus it is the development of

“... the supernatural man who thinks, judges and acts constantly and consistently in accordance with right reason illumined by the supernatural light of the example and teaching of Christ: in other words, to use the current term, the true and finished man of character.”¹

In another place Catholic education is regarded as a means to this goal, and thus it consists

“... essentially in preparing man for what he must be and for what he must do here below in order to attain the sublime end for which he was created.”²

It is clear that the school alone does not produce this “supernatural man,” nor does it offer all the essential means for “preparing”

¹ Pius XI, *On the Christian Education of Youth* (Official and Complete English Text, Washington: 1936), p. 36.

² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

man for his exalted destiny. But the school is among the means of preparing man for his supernatural perfection. The school has a proper and immediate end that distinguishes it from other educational agencies, and it employs distinctive means for securing that goal. The proper and immediate end of schooling is thus described by Pope Pius XI:

"Since however, the younger generations must be trained in the arts and sciences for the advantage and prosperity of civil society, and since the family of itself is unequal to this task, it was necessary to institute that social institution, the school."³

The Holy Father points out most clearly that the training in the schools (like the efforts of all educational agencies) must be carried on in an atmosphere that is thoroughly Christian, where the entire academic environment and all its instrumentalities are permeated with the spirit of Christian piety. This doctrine is simply an underlining of the obvious truth that the distinctive function of the school is to habituate the minds of the students to truth in a Christian atmosphere. This goal is properly intellectual and academic. It is within this framework that the finality of the theology courses must be sought.

A truly Catholic school must and will do more than teach its students, and some of its other services may well be more important objectively, because the school has educational responsibilities that go beyond the function of teaching. But if a school is to be a school at all, it must teach, it must habituate the minds of the students to truth, and it must do this in a distinctively academic way. Failing in this, it may remain some kind of educational institution, but it cannot remain a school.

THE COURSE ITSELF

Growth in knowledge, then, is the distinctive effect of schooling. Yet this end is not sufficiently specific, for throughout life man is constantly learning things as they happen to come along. In schools, men should learn things in an orderly fashion, precisely as they should

³ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

occur. Thus intelligible order in learning is an essential characteristic of schooling.

What is true of academic learning in general is applicable to every subject that is learned academically. It will be as true of courses in sacred doctrine as it is of courses in literature and in science. The proper and immediate goal of the courses in theology will be to habituate the minds of the students to divine truth in an orderly fashion and in a manner proportioned to the cultural level both of the students and of the academic environment of the school.

THE COURSE AND THE STUDENT

It is the content of the course in theology that distinguishes it from the rest of the curriculum. Here the student is brought into academic contact with the principles of divine wisdom, than which no higher are possible to attain. Here the student learns truths of the most universal applicability, truths which establish the ultimate norm for judging all things else in the scale of eternal values. These divine truths are not only speculative but practical, for they furnish a clear knowledge of the true ultimate end and of the means thereto, and the end is the principle of all practical endeavor.

Through the course in theology the student will be brought to a more explicit vision of the truths of Faith, and of other things in relation to Faith. He will be introduced to an organic synthesis of divine science that has a beginning, a middle, and an end, and a rationally intelligible nexus among them. He will be acquainted as perfectly as academic limitations will allow with the principles that must guide his quest for sanctity in the fulfillment of his vocation as a Christian. And he will come to a clear understanding of precisely what that Christian vocation entails in its proper dogmatic, moral, and ascetical framework.

THEOLOGY AND THE CURRICULUM

It may be said in truth that the entire process of Catholic education is directed to the healing of the wounds of Original Sin and to the reintegration of man, insofar as this is possible. And just as the communication of divine truth played a part in maintaining the

integrity of man in Paradise, so, too, will the communication of truth play a part in any Christian effort to assist man in his efforts to regain that integrity insofar as he can do so. In particular, the academic aspects of Catholic education should strengthen in man's reason that order to truth which was weakened by the wound of ignorance, and it is one of the most important functions of Catholic schooling to communicate divine truth to students by means that are properly and distinctively academic.

The order of the curriculum must have some direct relation to the general end of the total educational process; it must make a positive contribution to the attainment of that end. The end of Catholic education is supernatural, and, therefore, specifically different from temporal ends. And since every means must be directed to its proper end, the curriculum of the Catholic college, which is a means in the general process of education, must be somehow proportioned to a supernatural end. If it is not, then it is useless as a means.

It is essential to note that this does not involve any negation or any diminution of the natural order or of natural instrumentalities. Grace perfects, elevates, and enhances nature; it does not destroy it. Nor, as we shall show, does insistence on the supernatural in any way derogate from the value and the necessity of the natural sciences and arts in the curriculum.

THE MEANING OF ACADEMIC INTEGRATION

The concept of integration implies that whatever is to be integrated must be composed of parts which are capable of forming an harmonious unity. While it is true in the abstract realm of mathematics that a totality equals the sum of its parts, this is not true in the concrete order of reality. A totality is something more than the sum of its parts; it is an entity distinct, although inseparable from any or all of its parts. It is a reality of order; it consists in the order of parts in the whole. The parts themselves could never constitute this totality. It is the reality of the order of parts which constitutes the totality.

When the concept of integration is applied to the totality called the curriculum, it involves three notions:

1. a completeness resulting from the presence of all the essential parts;
2. the harmonious order of these essential parts among themselves;
3. the proper ordering of this organized totality to the end for which it exists.

In order to attain proper integration, the liberal arts curriculum must be conceived as a potential totality, that is, as a unification of elements in which the essence of the whole enters into each and every part according to its complete nature, although not according to its entire power. St. Thomas offers the example of the human soul in relation to its vegetative, sensitive, and intellective functions. It is the *same* human soul and the *whole* soul that discharges all three functions, so that the whole nature of the soul is present in each of them. But the entire power of the soul is not actualized in each of these three functions. The powers of sensation and understanding are not actualized in the vegetative functions, and the sensitive and vegetative powers are not directly active in the intellective functions. Human nature is present in each of these functions taken singly, but the fulness of human life is found only in all three taken together. Yet, among these, the rational function is distinctive and constitutive of the human soul, and in this function of reason a great measure of the distinctively human power of the soul is realized.

When the liberal arts curriculum is so conceived as a potential totality, one subject is seen as the essentially liberalizing influence for each student. Yet this one field of study will not attain its proper result unless it exists in company with others, and unless it draws from each of the other subjects the fullest measure of their distinctive contribution. Similarly, the rational power of the human soul is essential and distinctive, yet the perfection of its functioning is enhanced in direct proportion to the development of the sensitive and vegetative powers. In this concept, liberal education is not simply specialization, nor is it the result of a mere aggregation of courses. Rather, it is a concentration on some liberalizing discipline which acts as a frame of reference and as a norm of interpretation for the other subjects which are studied.

Like any movement, liberal education is specified by its terms,

by its beginning and by its end. Here the starting point is a choice of a field of concentration, a choice made under guidance by the student in terms of his own purposes, interests, and abilities. But the end of that movement, considered objectively and as the result of the curriculum, is a superior discipline, a wisdom toward which all other subjects tend as to the perfection and consummation of the entire course.

Now, just what shall that wisdom be? There is a supply of spurious wisdoms available as practical guides through life. Some of these are incorporated into secularistic curricula through philosophy falsely so called, and others lay hold of students' minds because nothing better is forthcoming. There is a worldly wisdom that fixes the vision on earthly success and directs every energy to acquire it. There is a carnal wisdom that directs men in an endless pursuit of pleasure. There is a false and perverse spiritual wisdom that envisions all in terms of personal excellence, and lays the world at the feet of man's pride. All of these are abominable, and the Catholic college must offer a bulwark against them, not merely negatively by preaching, but positively, by offering true wisdom as an integral part of its academic endeavors.

THE FUNCTION OF THEOLOGY AS WISDOM

What is the nature and function of true wisdom? Wisdom is an intellectual virtue that enables one to put things in their right order and control them well in view of some end. Wisdom judges and directs things in the light of their highest causes or principles. Thus there are several perfections which can be called "wisdom." Any art or science which is concerned with the ultimate principles in its own order is a limited kind of wisdom. Medicine is such a wisdom in respect of the various arts and sciences concerned with health, and it directs them all to the conservation or restoration of health. But the term "wisdom" is properly applied only to those who consider the absolutely ultimate cause of all things, and who judge and direct everything in the light of this ultimate cause which is the last end of all and the beginning of order in all.⁴ Such a wisdom is somehow divine, for it must deal with God.

⁴ *Contra Gentiles*, I. 1.

The infused wisdom which is a Gift of the Holy Spirit cannot take its place in the curriculum because it is not susceptible of academic communication. Metaphysics, which is the supreme wisdom of the natural order, is indispensable in the curriculum, but it will not suffice for Christian wisdom because man is elevated to the supernatural order, and ". . . in the things of God, natural reason is often at a loss."⁵

What, then, remains to meet the demands for a Christian wisdom in our schools? There is the wisdom of theology which stands midway between the infused wisdom of Faith and the acquired wisdom of true philosophy. It is based on the revealed principles of Faith and is developed and exercised by human endeavor. It can be communicated by academic means to those who share the Faith. It is lost directly only by the sin of infidelity.

In what sense precisely is theology a true wisdom? There are three virtues that perfect that intellect in the order of knowledge: understanding, science, and wisdom. Understanding is a quasi-intuitive, habitual knowledge of the first indemonstrable principles of reason. Science presupposes understanding and is habitual knowledge of conclusions reached by demonstration. Wisdom presupposes both understanding and science, it embraces the knowledge of demonstrated conclusions. But reaching beyond this, wisdom judges reality in the light of its highest principles, defends its own proper principles, and orders and directs all things in the light of these highest principles. Clearly, then, wisdom is the highest perfection of the mind and the apex of the intellectual edifice. It is distinguished from understanding and science not by opposition, but by addition.⁶

This is completely accurate when applied to the natural wisdom of philosophy, but the concept of wisdom is applied to theology only by analogy. Theology finds its principles in the revealed truths of Faith. The principles of Faith are related to the wisdom of theology in the same way that the first principles of understanding are related to metaphysics. Just as science and metaphysics develop and elaborate the principles of reason, so theology develops and elaborates the principles of Faith by human endeavor. Functioning as a science,

⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 2.

⁶ *In Lib. Boet. de Trinitate*, Q. 2, a. 2, ad 1.

theology demonstrates conclusions from the principles of Faith and elaborates the interrelation of these various conclusions. Conceived as a science, theology is an habitual knowledge of conclusions derived from revealed principles.

That is surely an accurate definition, but is it adequate? Does it fully explain the nature of theology? If theology is only a science, where do we turn for a defense of the principles of Faith, for no science defends its own principles? And where shall we seek an explanation of the principles of Faith, and a judgment of other things in the light of these principles, when such explanations and such judgments are not included in some scientific conclusion? If theology is only a science, then it is restricted to a very limited exercise in dialectic based on Faith.

But if theology is conceived as a true wisdom, these difficulties disappear. It is proper to wisdom to defend its own principles, because there is no higher discipline to which recourse may be made. It is proper to wisdom to explicate its own principles, even apart from scientific conclusions. It is proper to wisdom to judge and to order all reality in the light of its proper principles. Thus, in its adequate conception, theology is a discursive wisdom that considers God as He knows Himself and reveals Himself to others, and it considers all other things precisely in their relationship to God, Who is their beginning and end.⁷

The curriculum of the college must provide a beginning in wisdom and in the intellectual virtues, and growth in these should enable the student to understand the course of studies better and to participate in it more intelligently. Thus, when St. Thomas teaches that the study of wisdom is more perfect, more sublime, more useful, and more delightful than any other, he does not mean the fullness of theological wisdom, for he concludes his statement by saying that knowledge of the most noble things, howsoever imperfect that knowledge may be, confers the greatest perfection on the soul.⁸

Therefore, if the study of this divinely human wisdom, which is the highest that can be acquired by human effort, is omitted from

⁷ F. P. Muniz, "De Diversis Muneribus S. Theologiae Sec. Doctrinam D. Thomae," *Angelicum* 24 (1947), p. 113.

⁸ *Contra Gentiles*, I, 2; 8.

the curriculum of the Catholic college, the student is deprived of a benefit to which he is justly entitled, no claim can be made to a distinctive academic education in our colleges, and we make it impossible to accomplish by truly academic means the end we claim to pursue.

Without this divinely human wisdom as an integrating force in the curriculum, how will the college, precisely as an academic agency of education, develop in the student an habitual knowledge of the truths that must guide his entire life; and how will there be possible any truly academic exercise in those judgments that are essential to the student as an educated Christian?

Theology is a discursive wisdom. In its highest development it is scholastic—a product of schools, at home in schools, a business for teachers and for scholars. It must be in the schools as an active force if we are to claim an integral and an integrated curriculum; otherwise our colleges are Christian only by some extrinsic and accidental effort.

THE INTELLECTUAL HABIT OF THEOLOGY

The proper and immediate goal of every course of study is to habituate the mind of the student in some manner or other. In the case of the course in theology, the proper and immediate result envisioned is the *habitus* of theology. To see if such habituation is truly possible in undergraduate courses, the nature, subject, generation, and growth of the habit must be examined.

THE NATURE OF THE HABIT OF THEOLOGY

Like every other habit, theology pertains to the first species of quality. Here it must be distinguished from a disposition by reason of its permanence, its firmness, and its origin from unchangeable principles of faith.⁹ Theology proceeds from a group of first principles which are presupposed to it and which are held in virtue of another habit, namely, the infused virtue of faith. Thus, the *habitus* of theology is radicated in faith, but it is elaborated by diligent effort of reason. It is, therefore, formally an acquired habit.¹⁰

⁹ *Summa*, I-II, Q. 49, a. 2, ad 3.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, I, Q. 1, a. 2.

In its adequate conception, theology is not only a science which deduces conclusions which are virtually contained in the formally revealed principles of faith,¹¹ it is eminently a wisdom which must defend and explain its proper principles. As the supreme wisdom, theology must judge, order and use all other knowledge.¹²

The various functions of the habit of theology, defensive, explicative, scientific, and judicative are related as members of a potential totality. This means that the essential perfection of the habitus is found in each of the functions, and that the force or power of the habit is exercised more perfectly in some rather than in others.

THE SUBJECT OF THE HABIT OF THEOLOGY

Theology is unique in this that it is simultaneously both practical and speculative.¹³ Its principal subject, therefore, is the intellect.¹⁴ But, like every other acquired intellectual habit, theology is radicated also in the internal senses of memory, imagination, and the cogitative power. This follows from the fact that the intellect in forming any habit must use phantasms which are produced by these sense faculties. Gradually the intellect acquires a certain capacity for considering these species. At the same time, and in virtue of the same exercise, these internal senses acquire a special *habilitas* whereby they readily provide the proper phantasms for the intellect. Thus the habit of theology resides principally and formally in the intellect, but materially and dispositively in these sense powers.¹⁵

FORMATION OF THE HABIT OF THEOLOGY

It is the function of these internal senses to prepare the proper object of the intellect. Therefore, a man is remotely well disposed to acquire a habit when his body in general and these senses in particular operate well.¹⁶ He is proximately well disposed when the sense memory is firmly retentive, when the imagination is free of

¹¹ *Ibid.*, aa. 6, 8.

¹² *Ibid.*, a. 4.

¹³ *Ibid.*, Q. 89, a. 5.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, I-II, Q. 50, a. 4, ad 3.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Q. 51, a. 3.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, I, Q. 85, a. 5.

extraneous images, and when the cogitative power promptly and easily produces the desired phantasms. To develop such facility in these sense faculties, many repeated acts are required. The amount of repetition required will depend upon the individual nature and the previous training of the student.

We may inquire if an intellectual habit could be formed by a single act? This is to ask if the potentiality of the mind could be perfectly overcome in a single demonstration so that the mind would assent firmly to the conclusion in virtue of that one demonstration. Now if we suppose a firm and lively grasp of the principles of faith and if we also presuppose sufficient exercise to insure the proper remote and proximate disposition of the senses, then, absolutely speaking, it is *possible* to acquire the habit by a single act.¹⁷

Such a possibility seems rarely to be verified in practice. The acquisition of knowledge involves a transition from potency to act on the part of the intellect. Like most acts of generation, its full perfection is not ordinarily had immediately; rather, it is acquired successively.¹⁸ Since habits resemble the acts by which they are acquired, the habits themselves are generally acquired by many successive acts instead of by a single demonstration.¹⁹

Whether a habit is generated by a single act or by many successive demonstrations and judgments, the nascent habit is imperfect. The first and more obvious imperfection of a new habit results from its lack of extension through the orbit of the material cause of the habit.²⁰ In view of the tremendous extent of the wisdom of theology through all its potential parts, and of the purview of each single part, the material limitation of the new habit is immediately evident, confined, as it must be, to one or a few judgments or conclusions.

The second and more significant imperfection of the new habit is the tenuous participation of the subject in the form or quality. Habits, like other qualities, admit of intensification and remission in proportion to the subject's participation in the form.²¹ The im-

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Q. 89, a. 5.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, I-II, Q. 54, a. 4, ad 3.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Q. 52, a. 1.

²⁰ *Contra Gentiles*, II, 19.

²¹ *Summa*, I-II, Q. 49, a. 2, ad 3.

perfection of the intellect's participation in the new habit is evidenced by its lack of promptness, ease, clarity and joy in assenting to the new conclusions or judgments. The imperfect participation of the internal senses is noticeable in frequent failing of the memory, distractions in the imagination, sluggish presentation of phantasms by cogitative power.²²

"Anyone who has a science imperfectly so that he can lose it easily, is better said to be disposed for the science than to have it"²³ The imperfect habit of theology described above is more of a disposition than a true habit. But it is the beginning of a true habit which, of its very nature, responds to exercise and tends toward the more perfect state of a true habit. No one ever acquired the habit without first having passed through the stage of disposition.

INCREASE OF THE HABIT OF THEOLOGY

A permanent and naturally unchangeable disposition of the intellect is acquired only through a succession of acts proper to the habit. The beginning is found in a disposition. Gradually, through the exercise of repeated acts, the quality tends to the permanency, facility, and satisfaction of a true habit.²⁴ Here we may remark on the importance of the order of discipline which brings to each single act the full force of all preceeding acts, thus simultaneously consolidating gains and making advances. No other order of presentation can accomplish this.

How many acts are required, how much growth through exercise is necessary, before a student may be said to possess the habit of theology? Obviously, there is no mathematical or universal answer to this question. We encounter the problem of individual differences.²⁵ The presence of the habit must be judged in terms of the demonstrated capacity of the mind to perform acts proper to the habit, that is, to "theologize."²⁶ Now what characterizes acts that flow from a habit rather than from a disposition?

²² *Ibid.*, Q. 54, a. 1, ad 1.

²³ *Ibid.*, Q. 53, a. 2, ad 1.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, I, Q. 1, a. 7.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, I-II, Q. 52, a. 1.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, I, Q. 87, a. 2.

The first and less important sign of habituation is found in the range of theological material over which the student can elicit acts of defense, deduction and judgment. This is less important because it is a sign of quantitative perfection which is less formal in the judgment of a habit which is essentially a quality. The more perfectly the habit is possessed quantitatively, the greater the variety and amount of properly theological material to which it will extend.²⁷ This, however, is not a case of simple addition, for the demonstrations and conclusions of theology are ordered and one is derived from another. The ability to see and to show this order and dependence must be considered.

The second and more significant sign of the presence of a true habit is to be found in the degree of intensity characteristic of the participation of the subject in the quality. If the intellect can elicit properly theological acts clearly, easily and promptly, then the habit is present.²⁸ A prompt and correct judgment of reality in the light of divine Revelation is a clear sign of the unshakable permanence of a true habit.²⁹

The indications of an adequate *habilitas* in the internal senses where the habit of theology resides dispositively and materially are threefold:

1. The sense memory must have achieved a certain firmness so that theological concepts are familiar and easily evoked.³⁰
2. The imagination must be free of distracting images which may diminish the efficiency of the habit or even impede and destroy its function.³¹
3. The cogitative power must be able promptly and easily to present the phantasms upon which the intellect works.³²

These, then, are the qualities to be sought in the student of theology. All of them can be determined by examination and by exer-

²⁷ *Ibid.*, I-II, Q. 54, a. 4, ad 3.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, Q. 52, a. 2.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Q. 53, a. 3.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, Q. 51, a. 3.

³¹ *Ibid.*, Q. 53, a. 3.

³² *Ibid.*, I, Q. 89, a. 5; I-II, Q. 50, a. 3, ad 3.

cise. Different students will attain different levels of perfection, as they do in any subject that is taught. The art of pedagogy, the order of the course, the zeal of the students will all play important roles in the end result. But there is no argument from the nature of habit, nor of the nature of the process of academic habituation, against the real possibility of bringing the student to a degree of perfection in the habit of theology.

CONSTRUCTING A COURSE IN THEOLOGY

It is not too difficult to demonstrate the need for courses in theology in the undergraduate curriculum. But the solution to that problem is not a denial that others exist. There is assistance available in the solution of the problems of constructing a course in theology for undergraduates in the Prologue to the *Summa*. There St. Thomas states that the problem is threefold: the problem of content, the problem of order of presentation, and the problem of method.

It is imperative to note that any adjustment made in the light of the finality of the student's vocation as a layman living in the world is purely accidental to the nature of theology. Essentially it is and must always remain a discursive wisdom about God and about other things in relation to God, based upon the principles of revelation and elaborated and developed by human reason in the light of that revelation.

THE PROBLEM OF CONTENT

At the very outset, it is necessary to make two fundamental distinctions. The first is between the content and the emphasis of the course. The second is between the essentials and the non-essentials.

Content refers to whatever can be comprised in theology. It is a broad concept embracing both essentials and accidentals, and includes the principles, processes, and conclusions of theology without specifying their absolute or relative importance. The content of theology is found in the entire *corpus theologicum*.

Emphasis refers to the degree of explanation and demonstration accorded to different elements in the content. While content is intrinsic to theology and pertains to its essence, emphasis is extrinsic

and pertains to its use. Thus emphasis will be the principal differentiating element in courses of theology designed to prepare men for the priesthood and in courses designed for laymen. A community of content will insure that both courses are truly theological; a distinction in emphasis will suit each to a particular need.

The essentials of theology are those principles, processes and conclusions that are indispensable for its existence as wisdom, i.e., as a true perfection or habituation of the intellect. If any of the essentials are omitted, the knowledge resulting from study is either belief or opinion, but it lacks the permanence and perfection of science and wisdom. Thus, if the tract on the Trinity were omitted or essentially curtailed, a student could not acquire the habit of theology.

The non-essentials of theology comprise everything in the content except the essentials. Certain specialized tracts such as those on mystical phenomena and some aspects of positive theology are examples of those which are not essential to the constitution of the essence of theology.

In the light of these distinctions we may establish some conclusions regarding the content of theological courses for the undergraduate curriculum.

1. The proper and immediate goal of the course is scientific and sapiential knowledge of the truths of revelation, and of other truths in the light of revelation. Consequently, whatever is essential to the divinely human wisdom of theology must be included in the course. If any essentials are omitted, the course is not truly theology.
2. The ultimate use of this theological wisdom is the personal sanctification of the students. Consequently, whatever is conducive to this end must receive special emphasis within the general framework of theology. Thus, for example, the grace and proper dispositions for reception would be emphasized in the tracts on the sacraments.
3. The proper vocation which all Christian laymen share is to mediate between the spiritual and temporal orders, either through Catholic Action or through Catholic activity. Consequently, whatever is conducive to this end must receive

- special emphasis within the framework of theology. Thus, for example, the tracts on Confirmation and the Mystical Body would be specially emphasized.
4. Certain parts of the content which are non-essential to theology itself will be specially useful in view of the layman's vocation and will always be included in the course for this reason. For example, certain details on the virtue of liberality as it governs alms-deeds, and some aspects of the virtue of observance and the virtue of respect which govern the relations of children to parents, must always be included.
 5. Non-essentials which are specially necessary for the layman's vocation in view of contemporary conditions will be included and emphasized as long as circumstances warrant. For example, in our own day certain non-essential conclusions regarding interracial justice, war and peace, and the relationship of the individual to the common good, must be emphasized in the light of present day circumstances in which the students must work out their vocation. But it is conceivable that changes could occur that would allow these matters to be de-emphasized or even excluded in favor of others that would be more timely.

THE PROBLEM OF ORDER

Once the content of the course has been decided, there remains the further problem of the order in which these elements are to be presented. Many suggestions have been offered on this count, but two are really fundamental, and, in a certain sense, are representative of all the rest.

The content of theology may be taught either in the order of psychological appeal, or in the order of the doctrine itself, which is a real order of divine things.

When dealing with the problem of content, it becomes clear that there is a certain irreducible minimum without which theology cannot exist as a true wisdom. The same is not true regarding the order in which it is taught. Absolutely speaking, the intellectual habit

of wisdom can be had no matter what order is followed. No particular order is so essential to theology that the divine wisdom could not be learned if some other were followed. But the order of presentation should be a positive assistance to learning, and from this aspect one order is better than another.

The most common order proposed by those who favor a presentation based on psychological appeal would group the various tracts around the Incarnation as their center and unifying principle. This solution to the problem of order should be considered carefully in terms of its probable results. In reality, this solution seems to propose more questions than it answers. Granted that a presentation of the truths of the Incarnation could be given a greater appeal psychologically than, for instance, the tracts on the existence and nature of God, such a beginning would raise many questions that could not be answered theologically at that stage of the instruction. The Incarnation is understandable only in terms of Divine Goodness and of human needs. The Divine Goodness raises the question of goodness in itself and as an attribute of God. In turn, this poses the most fundamental question of the existence of God and of the Divine Nature. If such an order is followed, the teacher will be forced to give inadequate answers to many fundamental questions in order to clarify problems which cannot possibly be understood, except in terms of other solutions that are prior, both in the order of doctrine and in the order of learning. Whatever advantages are alleged in favor of a departure from the order of the subject-matter will be lost if they are had at the expense of clarity and ease of learning in relation to the entire body of theological wisdom.

Historically, it was proposed to seek the unity of theology in the *Totus Christus* considered as the *objectum formale quod*. This theory was advanced by Robert Grosseteste and by Robert Kilwardby.³³ It was explicitly considered by St. Thomas and rejected. This involves a confusion of the material and formal aspects of theology. The *Totus Christus* is indeed considered in theology, but under the more ultimate aspects of its relationship to God.³⁴

³³ Cf. Robert Grosseteste, *Hexaameron*, (text cited by Phelan, *Mélange de Wulf*, p. 176); Robert Wilwardby, *De Natura Theologiae* (Munster: 1935), p. 17.

³⁴ *Summa*, I, Q. 1, a. 7.

Another difficulty arising from the proposal to change the essential formality of theology is the prodigious labor involved in such a task and the problem of discovering someone with sufficient genius to accomplish it. Because of the formal change involved, the new discipline would be analogous to theology, i. e., it would be more different than like what we now have. It is by no means immediately clear that whatever good effects might be expected from such a new discipline could not be had by the more simple method of modifying accidentally what is already to hand in traditional Scholastic theology.

The order of doctrine is properly theological because it is based on the proper subject-matter of theology. The purpose of this order of divine reality is to manifest the truth in regard to God Himself, and in regard to other things insofar as He is their beginning and their end. This order is exemplified perfectly in the *Summa* of St. Thomas.

To follow this order in learning theology is a tremendous advantage in acquiring the divinely human wisdom. The clarity and intrinsic unity of this order is in itself a pedagogical device which is conducive to the acquisition and perfection of theological knowledge, because in it every advance into the unknown is made with complete dependence upon what is already known. Only rarely does one find in the *Summa* a reference to what is to follow. Thus the order of doctrine is in complete accord with the scientific nature of theological wisdom.

The order of doctrine leads the student to an appreciation of the unity of theology itself, and thereby preserves him from the harmful effects of the atomization of theology. In the order developed in the *Summa* there are no artificial distinctions into dogmatic, moral, ascetical and mystical theology. Rather is the entire body of theological knowledge unfolded as a sapiential vision of reality from the exalted aspect of divinity.

It is clear from the conclusions drawn regarding the content of undergraduate courses that the order followed must be flexible enough to admit the many non-essential conclusions that would not be emphasized in a seminary course. The order followed must be sufficiently lofty in view and flexible in scope to absorb, correlate and

clarify whatever contributions are made to the body of theological knowledge. The order of doctrine exemplified in the *Summa* is suitable for this purpose, for it is like a vast intelligible frame of reference which can contain all the developments of theology and add a certain clarity to them by relating them to the whole deposit of divine wisdom.

There are three main reasons for adhering to the order of doctrine in presenting theology to undergraduates:

1. This order is most suitable for meeting the demands of science and wisdom, and these intellectual perfections are the immediate and proper goal of the course.
2. The order of doctrine is most suitable to that clarity of understanding which is so essential to the instruction of beginners. In this order the most fundamental truths are unfolded first. It does not presuppose answers, but rather concludes to them.
3. The order of doctrine is more conducive to personal sanctification which is perfected in love begotten of knowledge. It cannot be maintained that any academic course is the immediate cause of sanctity, but it can be maintained that the disposition of the matter to be learned can promote sanctify within the limits of science by facilitating the learning of the doctrine, and by dispelling tedium, confusion, and disgust.

In brief, an order of presentation that manifests the grandeur of divine truth and leads to an integrated view of God and of all else as related to God is a positive aid to contemplation. It is the contemplation of spiritual goodness and beauty that is the beginning of spiritual love.³⁵ This is an aid and support to charity which is the bond of perfection and sanctification. A presentation following the order of the subject-matter is a positive aid in preparing undergraduates for their vocation as mediators between the spiritual and temporal orders. This order is a true framework for judging all things in terms of divine standards, and for viewing all things in terms of

³⁵ *Ibid.*, I-II, Q. 27, a. 2.

their mutual relations and of their ultimate relationship to God. This is truly the order of wisdom, and wisdom is the most perfect preparation for the lay apostolate that can come through human instruction.

THE PROBLEM OF METHOD

The method of presenting theology to undergraduates presents formidable difficulties. This is not simply the problem of the methodology of learning in general, nor yet the problem of methodology from the purely pedagogical viewpoint. Rather the problem is special and confined within the limits set by the nature of theology on the one hand, and the capacities of undergraduates on the other.

In an effort to understand and explain this problem we can have recourse to a few passages from St. Thomas.

The method of any investigation ought to be in harmony both with things and with us. For if it is not suited to the matter, things will not be understood; and if it is not suited to us, we shall not be able to apprehend the matter; for example, divine things are such by their very nature that they cannot be known except by the intellect. Consequently, if anyone wished to follow another method and to use imagination instead, he would not be able to understand anything of them as a result of his considerations, because truths of this kind are not thus to be known. But if, on the other hand, one wished to know divine things so as to see them in themselves, and to comprehend them with the same certitude with which sensible things or mathematical demonstrations are comprehended, this too would be impossible; even things which are in themselves understandable in this way cannot be perfectly grasped because of the weakness of our intellect.³⁶

The use of a purely imaginative method of presentation is clearly unsuitable to the nature of theology. So, too, is a purely natural method of inquiry such as is employed in philosophy. The method of theology will not produce the same degree of evidence that is found in philosophy and the mathematical sciences, because the method of theology must share in the qualities of the principles from which it proceeds, and the principles of divine faith are not evident in themselves. On the other hand, the method of theology will be productive

³⁶ *In Lib. Boet. de Trinitate*, 1. 2.

of greater certitude than the method of philosophy or of the mathematical sciences, because it will share in the divine certitude that is proper to faith.³⁷

From the aspect of the nature of theology itself, St. Thomas teaches that

. . . it is especially proper to this doctrine to argue from authority, inasmuch as its principles are obtained by revelation; and hence we must believe the authority of those to whom the revelation has been made. Nor does this take away from the dignity of this doctrine, for although the argument from authority based on human reason is the weakest, yet the argument from authority based on divine revelation is the strongest. . . . Sacred doctrine properly uses the authority of the canonical scriptures as a necessary demonstration.³⁸

Yet even authority is not sufficient for theology. The use of authority will determine only that a given thing is such, or is not such, and its effect terminates at the imparting of information. In addition to authority, theology must use another method.

Sacred doctrine also makes use of human reason, not, indeed to prove the faith (for thereby the merit of faith would come to an end), but to make clear other things that are set forth in this doctrine.³⁹

This method of investigating divine truth by reason under the positive direction of faith is especially applicable in the schools where the teacher

. . . intends not so much to dispel error, but rather to instruct his students so that they are led to an understanding of the truth; and then it is necessary to rely upon reasons which unearth the root of truth and which make (the students) understand how what is said is true; otherwise, if the teacher should resolve a question solely on the strength of authority, the student would indeed be certain that it is such, but he would acquire neither science nor understanding, and would go away empty-headed.⁴⁰

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Summa*, I, Q. 1, a. 8, ad 2^{um}.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Quaes. Quod.* IV, Q. 9, a. 18.

The method of presenting theology to undergraduates, then, must retain its sapiential and authoritarian character and, at the same time, must be accommodated to the capacities of students at the undergraduate level.

In discussing the method of presenting theology to undergraduates, as in every other phase of the total problem, it must be borne in mind that the purpose of such courses does not demand the same degree of perfection or of penetration that is demanded of a seminary or a graduate course. A minimal degree of scientific apparatus will suffice to attain the beginnings of the theological habit in the student.

The essence of a science consists in this, that from things known a knowledge of things previously unknown is derived, and since this can occur in relation to divine things, evidently there can be a science of divine things.⁴¹

The undergraduate course in theology is not intended to bring students to the ultimate perfection of the habit of theology, any more than undergraduate courses in mathematics or chemistry are intended to do so in those fields. Rather it is intended to implant the beginnings of a true habit as a dynamic and vital perfection of the mind. Once radicated in the mind, this nascent habit should increase both intensively and extensively through use; it should stamp with permanence the student's convictions toward the realities of life as these are measured against a divine standard that is known and understood.

It becomes clear that the method of theology makes great demands upon those who teach undergraduate courses. The concepts necessary to theology must be sharpened by contrast, clarified by examples, and ultimately crystallized in definitions that are adequate for scientific reasoning and sapiential judgment. The teacher must force the exercise of the theological habit by confronting the students with problems. His method of teaching must always achieve the repetition of the acts of demonstration, defense, and judgment that are proper to the divinely human wisdom. The acquisition and increase of the habit of theology, like any other intellectual virtue, are

⁴¹ *In Lib. Boet. de Trinitate*, Q. 2, a. 2.

absolutely dependent upon the repetition of scientific and sapiential acts.

SPECIAL PROBLEMS

Over the years that have witnessed the growth of the movement toward theology in our colleges, many difficulties have arisen. Due to limitations of time and space, we shall confine this discussion to two of these, namely, the problem of philosophical preparation, and an examination of the charge of "theological imperialism."

PHILOSOPHICAL PREPARATION

Perhaps the most formidable problem to be faced in making theology courses a reality for undergraduates is the problem of how they are to be prepared with philosophical knowledge for an adequate understanding of the methodology of theology. In seminaries, at least two years must be spent in the study of Scholastic philosophy as a preparation for theology. The student is thus raised, so to speak, to the level of theology by this preparation.

Such extensive preparation is necessary for the degree of perfection in theology that is required for the priesthood. If the same degree of preparation is required for undergraduates, then theology can never become much of a reality for them. It will be excluded by the limitations of time.

The degree of preparation must be proportioned to the perfection of the theological *habitus* which is envisioned as the goal of the course. The undergraduate course does not intend to bring students to the perfection of theological knowledge any more than other undergraduate courses aspire to perfection in their respective fields. "The essence of science consists in this, that from things known a knowledge of things previously unknown is derived. . . ." ⁴² How much philosophy must one have in order to accomplish that minimal perfection of science? What is the absolutely irreducible amount of philosophical preparation required for learning theology in a manner worthy of the name scientific?

Before attempting to suggest answers to these fundamental questions, it will be worth while to recall some facts that are pertinent to this problem.

⁴² *Ibid.*

First, the undergraduate is not wholly unprepared for theology when he enters college. His previously acquired religious instruction was at least materially theological. The undergraduate is not wholly without experience in conceptualizing religious truths. In proportion to the quality of previous religious instruction, the undergraduate has become intellectually acquainted with divine truth, and thus has been armed, to some extent at least, against the pragmatic and empiricist attitude so often propagated through the physical sciences. Thus he is defended against attitudes that would be hostile to the study of theology.

In fact, the student with a Catholic educational background has a much wider acquaintance with theology than he does with philosophy when he enters college. And that state often continues after he has begun to study philosophy formally. How often do philosophy teachers call upon theological concepts to clarify the notions of "substance" and "accident," of "person" and "nature"?

Secondly, the teacher of theology intends to clarify his doctrine and not to confuse it in the minds of the students. In view of the capacities of the students and the finality of the course, he will not propose subtleties to the uncultivated. Neither will he present difficult matters without duly preparing his students to grasp them. How often in seminaries do theology professors review points in philosophy before beginning their lectures on theological matters to which the philosophy is germane? Would not any reasonable teacher of undergraduates do as much?

Thirdly, the theology course for undergraduates can and should begin with an introductory section, lasting for one semester, during which it is possible to teach the student a parallel course in Logic. Once that is had, the student is in a position to follow the mechanics of theological methodology in an intelligent fashion.

It would appear incontrovertible that Logic must be learned before a student can learn theology in a formally scientific sense. This formal course in Logic should be required of freshmen in the first semester, not only with a view to preparing for theology, but to prepare to learn philosophy and other disciplines as well. During this same first semester, a course in the introduction to theology should be taught. This could be presented in such a way that the

indispensable doctrine of analogy could be explained in different contexts in order to enable the student to grasp the parallelism with the order of nature that is at the root of theological reasoning. Once that first semester is finished, the student can safely be introduced into the tract on the existence and nature of God, provided that he is under the guidance of a competent teacher who will make the necessary philosophical explanations that the doctrine requires. The concurrent development of the philosophical courses will cultivate the minds of the students in speculative thinking and will provide a deeper insight into analogues in the natural order that are necessary to theology. Thus the student will benefit from the proper co-ordination of the two essential wisdoms of philosophy and theology.

Such a co-ordination will free philosophy to exercise its proper function of integrating the curriculum in the natural order, and would prepare the way for the attainment of a natural perfection in the curriculum that would make it more amenable to the superior integration which can come only in the light of supernatural principles elaborated and explicated in theology. Colleges could then be rid of the anomaly of presenting a science of "ethics" to students whose destiny is supernatural, and could present a course in moral theology which alone can supply direction to an end and a beatitude that is known only by revelation.

"THEOLOGICAL IMPERIALISM"

There is a possibility that some advocates of theology for undergraduates, in a spirit of heedless zeal, would propose the substitution of theology for philosophy in the undergraduate curriculum. If such a proposal to eradicate philosophy has ever been advanced, I have never heard of it. However, the danger of such an aberration is a possibility, and it is well here to state an unequivocal opposition thereto on theological grounds.

The danger has been aptly labeled "theological imperialism" which is defined as ". . . the tendency of some theologians to make theology synonymous with "real" truth, and to make all "real" or "true" knowledge and "true" science intrinsically dependent upon theology."⁴³

⁴³ G. Klubertanz, S.J., "The Teaching of Thomistic Metaphysics," *Gregori-*

To maintain such a position is to ignore the very nature of theology as a wisdom. Theology does not enter into the constitution of any other discipline, nor does it order other sciences in the light of their proper principles. The problems of the defense of the first principles of reason, of the defense of the validity of human knowledge in the light of reason, of the order and division of the sciences are all properly philosophical problems. It is precisely because philosophy can solve these problems that it is truly a wisdom.

As a wisdom, theology is extrinsic to the natural sciences. It is the function of theology to judge, order and use other disciplines according to the supernatural norms of revealed truth. Theology operates upon lesser sciences not through their own principles but through their subjects, i.e., through the men who know and use these sciences. Theology demands the autonomy of every science and discipline in the natural order and requires that they be ordered among themselves by the only discipline that is capable of discharging that task, and that is the wisdom of the natural order that we call metaphysics. Metaphysics defends its own principles and proves the principles of the sciences subordinated to it. For all such tasks in the natural order, theology relies upon philosophy, because the intrinsic limitations of theology make it impossible for the divine wisdom to discharge these functions.

Philosophy and theology must be viewed as co-operators, not as competitors. This was the great vision of St. Thomas, as Pope Leo XIII has remarked. Theologians must remember that this heritage is always a challenge in the face of emerging contemporary problems.

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anum 35 (1954) pp. 3-17; 187-205. This article contains the definition of "theological imperialism" and alleges that this aberration is found in some writings of mine and of Fr. Dominic Hughes, O.P. A re-reading of the materials cited failed to produce support for the allegation. In fact, the contrary position was explicitly maintained. Cf. Thomas C. Donlan, *Theology and Education* (Dubuque, Wm. C. Brown: 1952) pp. 7, 8. Dominic Hughes, O.P., "Theology and the Liberal Arts," and "The Seminar on Theology," *Theology, Philosophy and History as Integrating Disciplines in the Catholic College of Liberal Arts* (Washington, C. U. A. Press: 1953) pp. 90, 110, 278.

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DIGEST OF THE DISCUSSION

The discussion was begun by a question raised by Father Gallagher, S.J., as to the meaning of the terms "science" and "scientific" in the context of the remarks with which Father Donlan opened the seminar. Father Donlan replied that the standard Aristotelian definition of science as "certain and evident knowledge acquired by demonstration" could be predicated univocally. He stated that "scientific" was an adjective indicating usually a method deriving from or leading to science. Father Gallagher asked if "science" could also mean an organized body of knowledge. Father Donlan replied that this would indicate the material of science, but that the formal predication indicated knowledge in the person who knew the body of doctrine. Father Gallagher inquired if there could be various ways of organizing the body of scientific knowledge. And Father Donlan answered that there could, but that some ways were better in themselves or in relation to the learner than others.

Father Van Ackeren, S.J., questioned the univocal concept of the definition of "science" and pointed out the varying degrees of perfection attained in the social sciences as opposed to physics or mathematics. He stated that metaphysics and theology were sciences only analogously. Father Donlan replied by modifying his previous statement and agreeing that metaphysics and theology were sciences analogously because of the different orders in which their principles existed and due to the different degrees of certitude attained by each. Father Van Ackeren submitted his opinion that even within the natural order, the term "science" is predicated analogously. Father Donlan agreed that some favor that opinion, but that he personally held for the univocal predication of the term within the natural order of knowledge. Father Maguire, O.F.M., offered the view that the experimental sciences were not "sciences" in the Aristotelian sense of that term.

Father Marrin, S.J., stated that he believed Father Gallagher's notion of an intellectual habit was too vague for practical purposes. He proposed a discussion of the difference in the habit of theology in the minds of a student and of a professor. Father Donlan replied that the difference was one of degree, not of kind. The student has

the habit inchoatively or imperfectly, while the teacher has the same specific habit more perfectly both intensively and extensively.

Father Bernard Murray, S.J., said that in organizing college courses attention must be paid to the previous religious background of the students and their intellectual level. In view of Father MacKenzie's paper on Biblical theology read that morning, Father Murray would say that the order of the *Summa* was conceptualistic and not entirely suitable for modern collegians. Father Donlan replied that the order of the *Summa* is basically the order of divine reality, an order of things in themselves in terms of their relationship of dependence. Father Donlan inquired of the audience as to the method of determining which of the practically limitless psychological orders should be used in presenting theology to undergraduates? It seemed to him that a limitless number of answers could be given. As to the previous preparation of the students, Father Donlan said that the same procedure should be followed in theology as in other courses, namely, to give remedial courses to the deficient students. In response to a question about texts for remedial courses, Father Donlan replied that he had heard of a successful program in which the most advanced Baltimore Catechism issued by the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine was used. Father Fenn expressed the view that the use of the term "habitus" was engendering confusion, and that to refer, as Father Gallagher did, to theology as a body of knowledge introduced Platonic idealism into the discussion. Father Donlan asked Father Gallagher to correct him if he misinterpreted his meaning and replied to Father Fenn that he assumed Father Gallagher to refer to the body of doctrine considered apart from a knowing subject. Father Gallagher agreed that this was his meaning.

Father George Graham said that the concept of order should extend beyond the course to the ordering of life itself. The Catechism was "ordered" but failed to lead to the wise ordering of the Christian life. Father Gallagher made the distinction between the "hair-splitting" courses offered in seminaries and a course leading to a true wisdom. He stated the thought that such a course could not lead to the desired goal in colleges.

Father Farren, S.J., asked if the desired wisdom should not go beyond a mere intellectual habit to inspire the student with motives

for leading the Christian life. In reply, Father Donlan pointed out that the divine wisdom of theology is the only humanly acquired wisdom that is both practical and speculative, that is, that theology of its very nature as wisdom supplies the principles for motivating and guiding human conduct in relation to God. He indicated that in seeking a "practical" discipline that could be transmitted academically, we must remember the limitations that are inherent in all human communication. There is, he said, a difference between "speculativo-practical" knowledge and "practico-practical" knowledge. The latter is had only by experience and is properly the matter of prudence which is perfected in the command of action. There is no pedagogical system by which such knowledge can be communicated. However, speculatively practical knowledge, which of its nature is ordained to action, can be communicated, and is communicated in the wisdom of theology. An example is had in the matter of prayer. Speculatively, one can teach the nature, function and necessity of prayer. Practically, a teacher can advance motives for praying and means for praying well. But the ultimately practical knowledge of prayer is had only by praying, and this cannot be communicated by any kind of teaching whatsoever. The lives of the great theologians like S. Bonaventure and S. Thomas and like many others, even contemporaries who are not canonized, clearly indicate the affective and practical effects of their study and teaching. The matter of theology is itself an incentive to a good life, and the very best that true teaching can offer. It is the task of the teacher so to exercise his art that the doctrine will be received in its fullness. We expect that the theology taught in seminaries will have a positive influence on the spiritual lives of the seminarians, but this influence comes through the mind which is the direct object of the teachers efforts.

Father Malley (St. Basil's Seminary, Toronto) stated that they had used the *Summa* and the Scriptures this year with a view to affecting the practical intellect as well as the speculative. It is not a question of trying to influence the will directly by teaching.

Father Mailloux, O.P. (University of Montreal), said that if theology is to be a true habitus the student must be supplied with all the concepts and distinctions necessary for the exercise thereof.

This is done in every science by the process of information in the beginning. The *habitus* is acquired only when its proper acts are performed by the student.

Father Donlan pointed out the distinction between the artistic and sapiential *habitus*. In medicine, for instance, all graduates are called "Doctor" which is a title properly indicative of science. Yet most are practitioners of the art of healing, and are not truly scientists. To a degree, the same can be said of priests. Much of the training in seminaries leads to competence in the practice of the art of theology through the various works of the ministry, but few would maintain that priests generally have the *habitus* of theology perfectly as a science or wisdom. It was the contention of the late *Father Farrell*, he continued, that the beginnings of the *habitus* could be established in a well-taught college course. Like every other *habitus*, it would be calculated to grow with post-school exercise; without such exercise, it would degenerate. It would include the ability to participate more intelligently in the positive direction of the Church and also the art of applying the truths of revelation to the guidance of one's own life. The question is, does such an aim exceed the bounds of possibility?

Father Mailloux offered the opinion that such a goal demanded that the methodology of the discipline be taught first. With this as basic equipment, the student could follow the truly theological acts of judgment, defense and conclusion of the texts and teachers, and thus arrive at the possession of the beginnings of a true *habitus*. *Father Donlan* inquired if this would be possible within the time limits of the collegiate schedule. *Father Mailloux* said he did not know, but that in the experimental sciences it is a long-drawn-out process. *Father Donlan* interjected that it would be unrealistic to demand more in theology than was attainable in other disciplines, and that a lesser degree of the best is preferable to any quantity of what is inferior. *Father Donlan* asked if the *habitus* of philosophy could be begun in college. *Father Mailloux* thought it could in four years of intensive work. *Father Donlan* replied that there are many difficulties in teaching metaphysics to undergraduates that are not encountered in theology and that the student comes better acquainted

with the material content of theology than he does with the content of philosophy. If the one is possible, why not the other?

Father Bowman, S.J., stated the view that most students will not get much, and therefore, it will be best to give them a large order of doctrine centered in the personality of Christ in hopes of making better Christians of them. Surely, this is better than offering a smattering of theology. Father Donlan said that he did not concede that it is impossible to give the beginnings of a true *habitus* of theology to collegians. He said that such a *habitus* was, in his opinion, the very best thing that the Catholic college could offer its students in the academic field. He asked Father Bowman how this Christian formation of the character is to be wrought by teaching and precisely what means accomplished this end. At Father Bowman's request, Father Donlan outlined the method of the text, *A Primer of Theology*, and showed the importance of adhering to the order of St. Thomas in laying the foundations of the theological *habitus*. He said that the *Primer* was envisaged as an outline to be used under the direction of a teacher. It is an aid, not a substitute for teaching. It is up to the teacher to implement the text and to exercise the art of pedagogy.

Father Nugent, C.M., asked if the *Primer* was divided into moral and dogmatic tracts. Father Donlan replied that the authors tried to synthesize the doctrine rather than divide it, and followed the example of the *Summa* which stresses the organic unity of theology and the interconnection and interdependence of the various tracts.

Father Bernard Murray, S.J., agreed with Father Mailloux about the difficulty of inculcating a true *habitus*. This is made evident by the lack of time in the curriculum and the emphasis placed by students upon their particular field of concentration. This latter emphasis disposed them against making the effort needed to acquire the *habitus* of theology. He asked if the appeal to the student should best be centered in the person of Christ rather than in abstract concepts ordered among themselves. There is an order in that approach, the order of revelation through Christ, Who is the source of all divine knowledge. In the New Testament, Christ appears first as man and then leads to a knowledge of divine truth. He is the way, truth, and life. He is a sufficient principle of order.

Father Donlan agreed that all Father Murray's proposals were undeniably true, but submitted that there are circumstances in the academic life that should be considered. First, the Sermon on the Mount is not a classroom lecture. Preaching and teaching are not identical and are not coextensive terms. The same truth is learned differently in different circumstances. Both the florist and the botanist study flowers, but from entirely different aspects and for different purposes. The college must prepare laymen for a vocation of Christian leadership. For this, they must know revealed truth analytically as well as appreciatively. The layman must understand these divine truths. The college must assist him to this understanding in the best way academically possible. In all disciplines susceptible of scientific order and scientific teaching, the scientific is preferable to the non-scientific. The fact that a text in botany fails to evoke the aesthetic response that would be forthcoming from reading a florist's manual on flower arrangement does not vitiate the value of the botany text. Its purpose is different; its purpose is to lead to a scientific knowledge of flowers. So, too, with the academic presentation of sacred truth; its purpose is to penetrate, to analyze, to understand. In the light of this understanding, the purpose of theology *for the student*, is to enable him to shape his life and affect his environment according to the teaching and example of Christ. Man's understanding of the whole scheme of the Christian life is dependent upon his knowledge of the parts. Theology will give a knowledge of the parts in its scientific aspect, it imparts a unifying knowledge of the whole in its sapiential aspect.

The possibility of centering theology around the concept of the whole Christ was considered and rejected by St. Thomas precisely because this is not an ultimate question. Christ is understandable only in terms of His divine nature, and this presupposes a knowledge of God and His nature. The order of the *Summa* emphasizes the role of Christ in the economy of salvation. The consideration of Christ is ultimate, and the tract is seen against the background of the totality of theology which precedes it. In the *Summa*, Christ emerges properly as the synthesis and the focal point of all divine truth. To maintain this position, the tract must be studied last, and must be learned in virtue of all that precedes.

Father Murray reiterated that the Christian cannot know God except through Christ. *Father Donlan* replied that the order of discovery is not the order of discipline. Historically, God was known first, was revealed before Christ existed in His humanity. Order is of the greatest importance in learning. In schools we should not learn things haphazardly as they happen to occur, nor even as they might have occurred in history. The distinctive note of academic learning is that we learn things in the order in which they *should* occur for purposes of understanding. The order of the *Summa* is best for that purpose. None better has yet been devised, nor is any likely to be devised.

Father Murray returned to the thought that Christ is the *one* mediator, our only mediator with the Father. Hence, He should be known first. *Father Mailloux* said that God first revealed Himself as Creator to the Jews. The child is interested in the Creator above all. Who made me? etc. Then he is interested in the divine attributes: Where is God? What can He do? What is He like? etc. *Father Smith, C.M.*, said that his own experience confirmed this.

Father George Graham (De Paul University, Chicago) asked what the Le Moyne Plan offered as an integrating factor in the college curriculum. *Father Gallagher* replied with a digest of the order of the text (cf. reference to text in bibliography). *Father Gallagher* offered his experience in teaching a course in Fundamental Theology to freshmen and again to seniors. He noted the more profound grasp evidenced by the seniors. *Father Donlan* said that this is found commonly among young priests who contend that they learned more in a few months of the active ministry than in years in the seminary. He said that the only reason for the experience of learning in the ministry was the years of preparation in the seminary. He contended that anything taught in virtue of previous teaching is learned better, and returned to his previous contention about the importance of good order in learning.

Father Keating (St. Peter's, Jersey City) maintained that *Father Gallagher's* experience illustrated *Father Donlan's* contention about order. He continued that the concept of order suitable to St. Thomas' time must be revised in view of the circumstances of the present day and the different condition of our students.

Father Clark, S.J. (Woodstock, Md.), said that if the position of Muniz on the nature and function of theology is accepted, then the act of the theologian is necessarily multiple. This adds to the difficulty of getting the undergraduate to "theologize," and without that the *habitus* cannot take root. He inquired if we could get undergraduates to "theologize" about the defense of the articles of faith and about judgments in the light of faith better than through conclusions from the principles of faith. In other words, get them to theologize in the light of the sapiential rather than the scientific functions of theology. At least, the teacher should drive home to the undergraduate the point that the professional's theologizing is not for him when it involves any independent thinking for which he is not properly prepared.

Father Mailloux distinguished between the *habitus in statu perfecto* and in *statu imperfecto* and clarified the matter by returning to a previous example about the doctor of medicine. Father Donlan agreed with Father Clark's suggestions about the type of "theologizing" suitable for undergraduates and expressed the thought that the suggestion would prove very helpful when carefully applied to the present problem of radicating the *habitus*. The necessity of "theologizing" to acquire the *habitus* was most sound, he said, for it opposed the false and unrealistic position sometimes encountered that would lend a kind of "sacramental" efficacy to the task of teaching.

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