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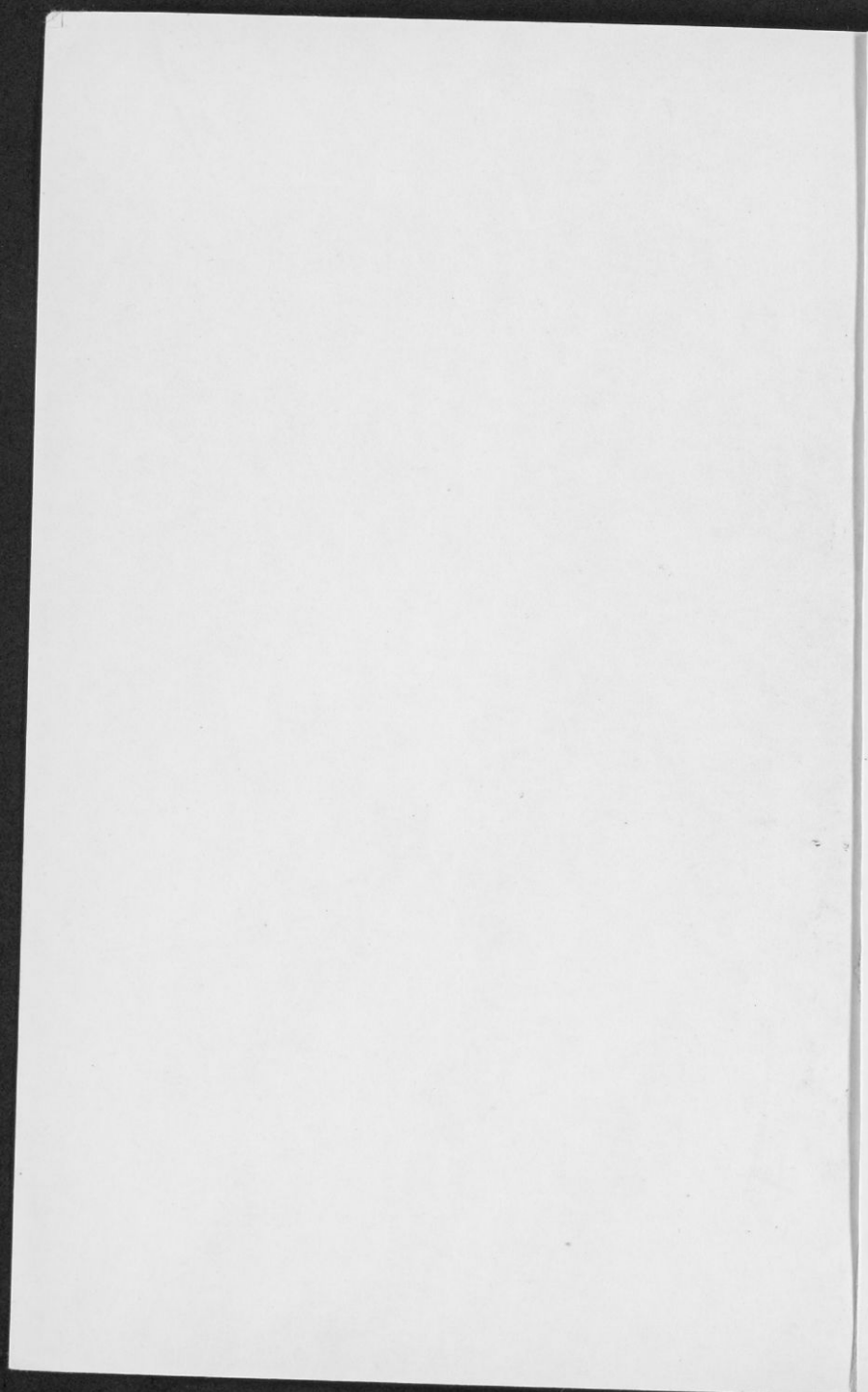
by the

Rev. Francis Drummey, C. S. C.



Edited by the

Rev. Cornelius Hagerty, C. S. C.



Our Life of Grace

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Preface



AT ST. EDWARD'S University, Austin, Texas, a society was organized for the discussion of questions in which interest had been aroused in the classes of philosophy. During my term as moderator of the society, I observed that most of my students did not understand the state of grace on its positive side. They knew it meant freedom from mortal sin; but they did not grasp the distinction between the natural order and the supernatural order; neither did they realize the significance of regeneration and divine adoption. And so I requested Father Drummey, who had just completed his course of theology at St. Edward's to write an essay on the *positive* aspect of the state of grace. He was already known to the Texas boys as "the wizard" because of his clairvoyant answers to their questions. This essay, however, was a more sustained effort than anything he had hitherto attempted. He soared



like an eagle to dizzy intellectual heights, and amazed the members of the society with his mastery in this region of sublimest thought.

I regarded the essay as the best any pupil of mine ever wrote. The meaning of the natural order as contradistinguished from the supernatural order is admirably treated. The analogy between divine conservation and concurrence in the natural order and habitual and actual grace in the supernatural order is clearly stated, — in fact, the whole essay is a powerful synthesis of natural wisdom with revealed doctrine. The plentitude of grace of the Blessed Virgin is fervently depicted and is made to emphasize the stupendous truth that there is a greater difference between the least soul in grace and the highest intellectual creature in a state of pure nature, than there is between the Blessed Virgin herself and the least soul in grace.

Father Drummey was pleased with his effort. When I congratulated him, he thanked me for having asked him to attempt it; and, according to his intimate friend,

Father Peiper, the last thing he inquired about before departing for Deming was the whereabouts of his copy of the essay. It had remained a manuscript in my possession until on a visit to Holy Cross College, through the courtesy of Mr. Young and Mr. Hooyboer, two copies were typed and bound. After Father Drummey's death his copy disappeared, and, fearing the other copy might also be lost I suggested to a friend of Father Drummey that it would be well to have it printed. This he enabled me to do.

Perhaps it would be well to warn the reader that Father Drummey's essay is a substantial piece of work. You will have to be wide awake to get what is in it. Grace is one of those subjects to which the words of St. Paul may be applied: "We have much to say, and hard to be intelligibly uttered, because you are become weak to hear. For whereas by this time you ought to be masters, you have need to be taught again what are the first elements of the words of God: and you are become such as have need of milk and not of strong

meat."¹ This essay is meat for men rather than milk for babes. There is no easy way to explain the meaning of spiritual and supernatural. God is a spirit. The first act of a saint is to know. Faith is an act of the intellect. Must all sermons be short? Did Christ die for the vulgar only? In spite of the present antagonism to everything aristocratic and the desire to abolish all classes in society, a class does exist which can read what the majority of people are either unable or unwilling to read. Religious orders have the duty to enrich with works on theology a language whose poverty in this field is pitiful. Until Arthur Preuss translated Pohle's Dogmatic Theology into English and Charles Hebermann and his associates gave us the Catholic Encyclopedia, English readers were largely dependent on compendiums. If works on theology were translated from the French or German they were usually abridged. Of late a noble effort has been started in England to make theology available for laymen. We are indebted to G. H. Joyce, S.J. for

¹ Heb. V, 12.

an excellent book on grace and to Father Arendzen for good books on the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation. But there is still, to use a phrase of Father Cavanaugh, "yawning receptivity" in the English language. Every serious treatment of a theological subject in language Americans can understand is a service to the cause of Christ. We must not forget there is an army of persons teaching religion in the United States who can read with facility no language except English, and a vast multitude of laymen who are studying or have studied philosophy in English.

The time seems ripe for a renewal of interest in the supernatural. The second world-war has given Naturalism a rude jolt. Men deified nature. They declared science had done away with any need of a Supernatural Being. Thinking they had evolved from animals, men began to behave accordingly; dreaming they were one with the divinity, their egotism passed all bounds. Looking now upon the tragic results of human pride and sensuality, the spiritually earnest are turning back to a

supernatural Father in whose power and love they can joyfully trust. Even in the state of nature man essentially outclasses the brute. A brute is not eligible for the state of grace because he has no intellect and will. These spiritual faculties are properties of men whether in the state of nature or of grace. Rare, indeed, among Americans is a clear understanding of the meaning of either spiritual or supernatural.

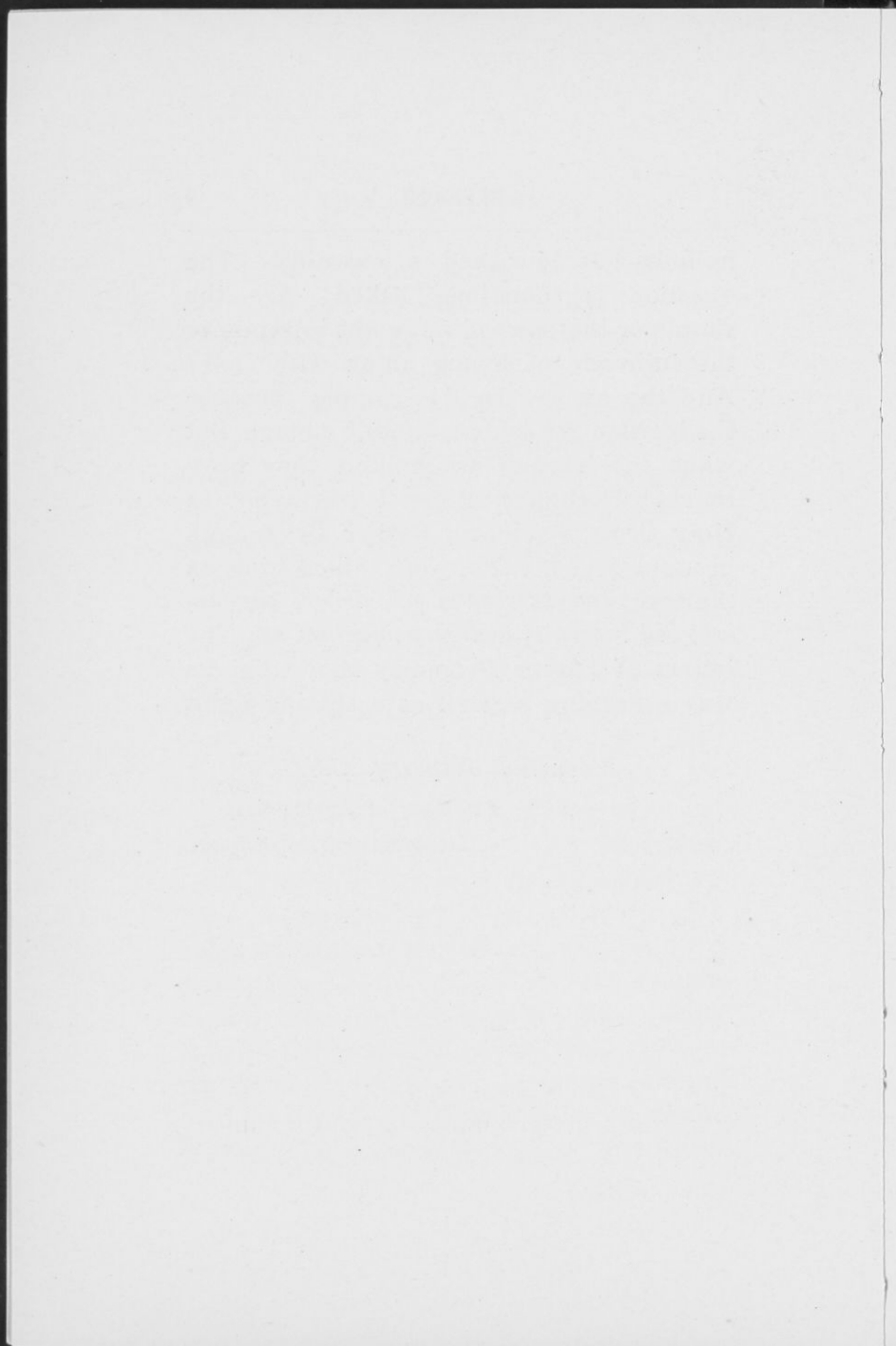
The biographical sketch which precedes the essay will further introduce Father Drummey to his readers. It indicates, I think, that the Holy Ghost has not been idle among the priests of Holy Cross. My original plan was to make it very brief, but after I became acquainted with the letters I saw the advantage of including quotations from them. In fact they deserve more attention than I give them. The letters I quote from were loaned to me by his mother and were written from Deming during the last three months of his life. I am sure the members of his own Congregation and his sisters in Holy Cross will be interested in them. They show that alert, intelligent

holiness has flourished in our midst. The question is sometimes asked: Are the simple or the learned more apt to attain to the intimacy of loving union with God? And the answer is: The simple; because the learned are seldom humble enough. But when the learned are humble they have the better chance. When I was a boy in Holy Cross Seminary, Father Cavanaugh brought over a bishop who talked to us on the text: *Lucere vanum est; ardere parvum est; sed lucere et ardere perfectum est.* The letters of Father Drummey show that he was a burning as well as a shining light.

Cornelius Hagerty, C.S.C.,

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University of Notre Dame.



In Memoriam



RANCIS EDWARD DRUMMEY was born December 26, 1899, on a farm near Monroe, Wisconsin. His grandparents came from Ireland: the Drummeys from Mayo, and the Murphys and McCarthys, his mother's people, from Cork. His father was a reverent and conscientious man; his mother had the gentleness and tenderness of the southern Irish. The boy grew up in one of those rural communities the gradual disappearance of which is a source of deep regret to all lovers of the Irish. A school stood on a corner of the Drummeey farm presided over by Mary Daugherty, a relative of the Drummeys. Pupils came from a number of Irish families living on adjacent farms and one teacher was charged with their entire elementary education. Thus a favorable environment existed for the transmission of the Catholic social inheritance. Innocence of heart, sincerity of mind, reverence for all that is holy had a better chance to flourish under

such circumstances than amidst the indiscriminate influences of a modern city. Mary Daugherty was an intelligent teacher, and succeeded in impressing on the nimble mind of her relative habits of exactness and thoroughness.

He pursued his high school studies in Monroe, living with his grandmother in town or driving back and forth to the farm in a buggy. After securing his diploma, he spent two years at the University of Wisconsin. He made progress in the art of writing and was grateful especially for a course in Wooley's English Composition. He was on the point of returning to Wisconsin for his junior year when the departure of his younger brother, Harry, for Holy Cross Seminary, caused him to realize his vocation. With characteristic decisiveness he followed in a few days. At Notre Dame he formed lasting friendships with his fellow - seminarians, enjoyed rugged health and was admitted to the Students' Army Training Corps then established at Notre Dame. So well did he succeed in his classes that he was selected as an honor-

student to make his philosophical and theological studies in Rome. At the Gregorian University his brilliant mind soon captured the respect of his professors and fellow students. Rome itself was a fascination to him, with its historical monuments and treasures of art. During the following summer he went to Lourdes to make his retreat, and there on August 20th, 1924, in the Grotto of the Apparition he pronounced his final vows of religion.

Shortly afterwards, while on a hike in the Pyrenees with a group of fellow-students, he suffered, to his own amazement and the shock of all, a hemorrhage of the lungs. Bowing in meek submission to the will of God "who scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" he "looked on Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, who having joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame."¹ At this point there began to be manifest the deep spirituality which characterized the last ten years of his life. These lines from the *Song of the Mystic* describe his experience:

¹ Heb. XII, 2.

I walk down the valley of silence—
 Down the dim voiceless valley—alone!
 And I hear not the fall of a footstep
 Around me, save God's and my own.

* * * * *

Do you ask what I found in the valley?
 'Tis my trysting-place with the Divine;
 And I fell at the feet of the Holy,
 And above me a voice said: "Be mine!"

* * * * *

Do you ask how I live in the valley?
 I weep and I dream and I pray.
 And my prayers, like a perfume from censers,
 Ascendeth to God, night and day.

At the command of his superiors he returned to the United States, took up his residence at Holy Cross Sanatorium, Deming, New Mexico, and set about the business of getting well with calm determination. Even the shock of the death of his brother, Harry, who had followed him to the sanatorium only to succumb after a year of ravaging malady, did not dishearten him. Scrupulously obedient to doctor and nurse, he yet availed himself of the opportunity the locality presented of learning Spanish; and as his health improved he devoted what time he could to studying theology.

So well did he succeed in private study that, when permitted, after four years, to take up formal class at St. Edward's University, Austin, Texas, his professors jokingly complained of difficulty in keeping up with his giant strides. After two years of intense application he was permitted by dispensation to be ordained priest on December 20, 1931. How he cherished this honor may be gathered from a letter to the Rev. James Donahue, C.S.C., his superior general: "I wish to thank you, good Father, for your thoughtfulness and kindness, especially for the greatest of all favors: making it possible for me to be ordained in so short a time."

He remained at St. Edward's for two years as professor of Religion and Spanish. The exhilaration of having reached the goal of the priesthood and the congenial atmosphere of the college stimulated him to renewed intellectual effort. During this time he wrote the essay on *Our Life of Grace*. His career as a teacher, like that of Father James Trahey, C.S.C., who lies buried in the little cemetery at St.

Edward's, was short in time but lasting in influence. Not only did he instruct his pupils well, but he inspired his fellow-teachers with enthusiasm for Christianity on its intellectual side.

The following year he was sent by his superiors to take care of a little flock of Mexicans at Georgetown, Texas. His knowledge of Spanish made him available for the work, and the sad plight of his parishioners stirred his priestly zeal to exertions beyond his physical resources. In two years, the hardships of missionary life and his own ardor brought back fatal activity to the latent malady. This time neither his own courage nor the devoted care of his Sisters in Holy Cross at Deming could avail. On June 17, 1935, God called him home. He lies buried at Notre Dame, beside the brilliant and beloved Father Cavanaugh, C.S.C.

The judgment of a man's intimate associates is a good standard by which to estimate his worth. Father Drummey was respected, admired and loved by those who knew him best. He radiated intellectual

vitality. His deep, quick mind had achieved a comprehensive grasp of Christian wisdom. He was at home in a philosophical or theological discussion. He was familiar with contemporary trends of thought and sensitive to sources of culture. His conversation had the charm of one who lived in a high realm of spirituality. He had a sincere love for truth. He detested intellectual dishonesty and did not like intellectual carelessness. Gentle and considerate of the feelings of others, he never became excited or disagreeable; but he stood his ground in an argument and spoke out like a free man even when diplomacy suggested that he be subservient. Truth was life to him and he did not compromise it. He did not suffer his judgments to be swayed by personal feelings. A word of praise or criticism from him had significance. He loved the companionship of priests. His penetrating intellect, his rare honesty, his joy in conversation, his whimsical humor, his deep humility, endeared him to the faculty at St. Edward's.

Considered not only as an intellect, but

also as a will, his was a strong spirit. He never lost self-control. The last decade of his life was a triumph of will over emotion, of grace over nature. He had to wage a constant battle against discouragement. Those who knew him intimately appreciated his dauntless courage and his unruffled serenity. He did not allow ill-health to make him selfish. It was sheer heroism that made him face the hardships of missionary work among the Mexicans. He might have asked to remain at St. Edward's or to retire to Deming, but he did not. He went where obedience called him, and the zeal of the Lord consumed him. His love for his mother and family was tender and strong. He was loyally devoted to the Congregation of Holy Cross and ambitious for its welfare and development. He was considerate and manifested true kindness of heart. One of his last requests was that the person who kept his room supplied with flowers be fittingly remembered.

The essence of sanctity consists in complete conformity of a human will to the

Divine Will. A severe test of such conformity is the humble acceptance of the summons of death in the midst of one's days. *In dimidio dierum meorum vadam ad portas inferi.* The pain, loneliness and separation of death are hard to bear at any time, but there is peculiar humiliation and disappointment in being called while one's plans are unfulfilled and one's comrades are still vigorous. It is hard for youth to realize "they also serve who only stand and wait." The following excerpts from his letters show that he departed from this life in loving union with God:

"I think I can truthfully say I am happy because my constant prayer is that God's holy will may be perfectly done in me. Make this your prayer for me." "Since I am the one most concerned about the outcome of my sickness and since I am cheerful and resigned to God's holy will, everyone else ought to be of the same dispositions. Keep up the prayer that God's holy will may be perfectly accomplished in me." "I hardly expect to get well. Yet, as I have said before, there is no gloominess or sadness on my part. I am cheerful and

happy in being resigned to go when it may please God to take me, and the saints tell us these are the best possible preparations. The only thing that causes me sorrow is that in all your letters you seem to make the recovery of my physical health the only end of your prayers. Once again, I beg of you, dear mother, to pray not that I may get well, but that the holy will of God may be perfectly accomplished in me. Please smile and be cheerful and thank God that He gives me this time to prepare to meet Him and to suffer a little in union with the Passion and Death of Our Lord. I offer all my little aches and pains as acts of love to the Sacred Heart." "I trust you are striving more and more every day to accept the sweet and holy will of God. Cheerfully to offer this sacrifice which He seems to be demanding of us is one of the very greatest things you can do for me. Do not get the impression that I am sad or downcast. Though, naturally, I am not laughing with a smile from ear to ear, I feel I am truly cheerful and at peace. I think I can honestly say that I have never felt closer to God than I do now."

“So far we have been considering only the cross and the sad side of life. But it would be a great mistake to let our thoughts stop here and not go beyond, for all sufferings and crosses are meant to lead to a glorious and unending future joy. Remember that after Good Friday there is always Easter Sunday. Heaven awaits them who have died, repentant of their sins. I am sure we ought to dwell more often on this aspect of our crosses and our sufferings. For all of us life is short. Let us pray and strive then that we may all be happily united in Heaven rather than that we may live on earth forever. Let us keep cheerful and happy in the thought that whatever God wills for us must always be for the best.” “When I hear of so many sudden deaths, I realize how good God is to me in warning me of the approach of my own and giving me the grace to prepare for it and to be resigned to it.”

“How much longer I have to live I do not know, but let us cheerfully leave it in the hands of God. I offer all my pains and

sufferings through the sorrows of St. Joseph and the dolors of Mary in union with the Passion and Death of Our Lord as so many acts of love to His Sacred Heart. Let us pray and suffer together and we shall be happy." "Try to keep cheerful and bear up, remembering that in resigning yourself entirely to God's will you are making the greatest offering possible, one which is very pleasing to Him and is bound to have a great reward. But if you make the offering and are then very sad and discouraged, in a way you take back the offering. Don't picture me as sad and mournful. While I have as much natural fear of death as anybody, I have resigned myself entirely to God and am confident He will take care of me. Keep up the prayers and good cheer."

"I know that you have made the great resignation to God and are cheerful and completely resigned to whatever His Will is regarding me. Let us be faithful to this offering, you and I together, and we will have an eternal reward where thorns will be turned into crowns. From the first I have never attempted to disguise the fact

that I am very sick, and I do not hesitate to tell you I am not expected to recover. Let us feel cheerful and happy about this because St. Paul tells us that we have not here a lasting city, but seek one which is to come. As I have told you before, I feel cheerful and entirely submissive to God's most holy Will." "I have been feeling pretty sick the last week. . . . As a precaution I was anointed yesterday. Don't think that it made me sad or fearful. On the contrary, it gave me renewed confidence and cheerfulness in the Lord. . . . Don't let this discourage or dishearten you, for trusting in the infinite Mercy of God I have hope of going to a better land where sickness, sorrow, mourning and death are no more. The best possible way you can help me is to be entirely resigned to God's holy Will and to pray that I may be equally so. I love all of you with all my heart and I ask you to favor me by keeping cheerful and entirely resigned to God's holy Will."

"Your telegram came yesterday afternoon and I was very happy to receive it. I do not mind your shedding a few tears;

these will help to relieve the strain; but this does not mean you should be sad or discouraged. Pray for me and leave all in the hands of God. Judging merely by human signs, there is every promise of a happy death for me."

On May 19th he wrote to his provincial: "Dear Father Burns: I cannot tell you how happy your gentle and fatherly letter made me. . . . I am happy that you do not forget me in your prayers. Perhaps, you will be pleased to know that I offer up every Friday for the interior life of our Community, and various other days for one or other of its particular interests. Just at present I am feeling pretty well. I regard this gentle but certain warning with the time given to prepare and grace to accept it, as one of the greatest mercies of God.

I remain your servant and son in Jesus Christ,

Frank E. Drummey, C.S.C."

After Father Drummey's death, Father Burns wrote the following letter to Mrs. Drummey :

"I need not tell you how deeply we all sympathize with you in the great loss that has come to you and us. The consolation must be that it is your loss and ours, and not his. His soul was so pure and holy and completely resigned to the divine will, that we must believe that his going was only a swift passage from earth to heaven. He had his purgatory on earth. The example of his saintly life with his perfect resignation to God's will is a precious heritage for our Community which we shall devoutly cherish. Who can tell?—perhaps, through the example of his saintliness he did more than others are able to do through a long life of service in ardent zeal. I feel we have him to pray for us in heaven. While he was in Deming these last months I felt that he was so near to God that his prayers would be precious for us, and in every letter I asked him for the benefit of them."

Evidently Frank Drummey aimed at

and achieved perfect submission to the will of God. The letters reveal humility and love triumphant in the life of this young priest. "Then said I: Behold, I come to do Thy will, O God." ¹

¹ Heb. X, 9.

Our Life of Grace



AT FIRST sight it might seem strange that your moderator should ask me to read a paper on a subject quite beyond the proper field of philosophical speculation. A little thought, however, will show us the propriety of integrating philosophy and theology. The Church has ever maintained that revelation and reason are not enemies but friends, and a proverb declares that philosophy is the handmaiden of theology. The history of the Church attests that true philosophy has served her well. In great crises brought about by disputes over the teachings of Christ the Church was obliged to use terms that were exact and intelligible. The happy privilege of supplying the terms in which she has defined many of the articles of faith belongs to Aristotelian and scholastic philosophy. If you would see how generously the Church appropriates the language of philosophy even in her liturgy, read the preface of the Mass

for Trinity Sunday, the sequence for Corpus Christi, or the Athanasian Creed.

Now there are few truths which a knowledge of philosophy helps us so much to understand as the doctrine of grace. It is the dogma of grace that places the whole structure of our religion on a supernatural plane, far, far above the reach of the unaided intellect of man. To know where the natural stops and the supernatural begins, we need a thorough training in the noble science of reason. It is my hope that this paper will give you yet another proof that the best possible natural preparation for a clear understanding of our faith is a course in scholastic philosophy. For those of you who are not of our faith a discussion of grace is far from being time wasted. Even as a mere matter of culture no man, no matter what his personal belief, can afford to be ignorant of a system of thought which has had such a far reaching influence on civilization. I fear that all too often men outside of the Church pride themselves on knowing her merely because they have learned to associate her in some

vague way with the feudal system, the Crusades, the clink of armor, Gothic architecture, etc. Really to get acquainted with the Catholic Church is to know her in her interior life—in her mind and heart and soul; and no one can know the mind and heart and soul of the Catholic Church unless he first learns something of her teaching about grace.

I feel that I should warn you at the outset that grace is strictly a supernatural subject; its very existence we learn of not from reason but from revelation. In this brief paper on one of the most profound and inscrutable mysteries of the faith—a mystery in the consideration of which the greatest minds have confessed their limitations, and innumerable other minds less great and less humble have grievously erred—it seems almost an unconscious sally of humor for me to say that I present nothing original. My aim is to make you acquainted with our common Christian heritage of truth.

The Natural Order

Since, as I previously mentioned, grace in the Catholic sense of the word belongs wholly to the supernatural order, before we can make any progress in our study, we must know what the supernatural order is; and before we can know what the supernatural order is, we must have at least an elementary idea of what is meant by the natural order. The key to an understanding of the natural order is to be found in an accurate analysis of all that the term *creature* connotes. There is one eternal Being, infinitely perfect in all His attributes. This Being, of course, is God. Now when God by an exercise of His incommunicable creative power causes another being to exist, He endows that being with principles or elements which constitute it and make it what it is. These principles considered as constituting and making a thing what it is are called its essence; considered as the subject in which its qualities inhere, they are called its substance; considered as the source from which the activities of a thing proceed, they are called

its nature. These three terms—essence, substance, and nature—are synonymous; they stand for the same thing regarded from different points of view.

Every being acts. From everything that God has made acts proceed as from their source. The universal principle of causality declares that for every effect there must be an adequate cause, or, in other words, that no effect can be greater than its cause; since, moreover, the acts of every being are effects which flow from that being's nature as from their cause, we must conclude that the acts of any being are of the same nature as the being from which they proceed. Furthermore, every being attains its end by its acts, and its acts are themselves a cause when considered in relation to the effect they produce. Hence the end of any being must have a real proportion to the acts of that being, and the acts of any being must follow the nature of that being itself. To deny this is to repudiate in its entirety the principle of causality.

Let me repeat that if we would have a

true notion of grace, we must have a clear idea of the supernatural, and if we would understand the supernatural, we must firmly grasp the limitations of the natural order. And once again, the understanding of the natural order depends on our forever keeping in mind what the term *creature* means. Now if we consider the lowliest atom, the microscopic plant, the invisible amoeba, the oak of the forest, the tiger of the jungle, man himself, the whole world of stars, or the highest of the angels, we shall see that the one concept common to them all, lying at the very root of their being is that they are created and, therefore, finite natures. If we can conceive of God creating a being as far above the highest angel as the highest angel is above inert matter, the same truth comes relentlessly back to us: precisely because this magnificent being would be a creature, it would resemble all other creatures in being finite. The creation of an infinite being is impossible.

When we speak of the natural existence of a creature, we must mean such a mode

of being as is proper to a finite nature; when we speak of the natural act of a creature, we mean an act which flows from and has a causal relation to a finite nature; when we speak of the natural end of a creature we mean an end proportionate to the natural mode of being and acting of a finite nature. With the truth firmly established in our minds that the product of the omnipotent act of creation must ever be a finite nature and that between the nature, the act, and the end of a being there must always be a strict proportion, let us carry our thought a bit further. Because of God's very perfection He can never act without purpose and wisdom and justice. When God, therefore, creates a being, He always fixes an end for that being to attain. Since a being attains its end by its act, and since its act, as an effect from a cause, cannot be greater than the nature from which it proceeds, we see that the natural end of every creature must be in just proportion to the nature of every creature. If this were not true, and God were to establish as the natural end for a creature that which was out of proportion

to the creature's nature, God would not be all-wise.

When, then, God creates a being and sets for it an end which it must attain, He binds Himself in justice to supply that being with all that is necessary for the attainment of its end. Manifestly God would not be just if He were to decree that a creature attain a certain end and at the same time were to deny that creature anything that was indispensable for it in order to reach its end. We may regard, therefore, as due in justice to a creature, once it is created, whatever it strictly needs to attain the end set for it by God. Since a creature's nature is necessarily finite and its act and end are in conformity with its nature, we see the intrinsic limitation of the natural order. Finiteness is its badge or trademark. We may consequently define the natural order as the sum total of all that is necessary for the natural existence, the natural operation, and the natural end of all created beings.

It would be a monstrous error to conclude, as many non-Catholic thinkers have

done, that the natural order as thus conceived is independent of God. So far is this from being true that the natural order requires the presence and operation of God just as imperiously as the supernatural order does. Once more, a glance at the implications of the term *creature* will make this clear. It is of the very essence of the creature that it has its being from another. Hence the very existence of the creature presupposes the Creator. Since the creature receives its being from another, it has not within itself the reason or necessity for its own existence. It must be conserved in existence. Hence the continued existence of the creature requires the continuous act of God sustaining the creature. Moreover, the creature attains its end by its act. But since no creature is its act but is in potency to its act, and since whatever is in potency can be reduced to act only by some agent extrinsic to itself, the activities of all creatures demand the presence of God to supply a divine *assistance* to enable them to act. Lastly, though each creature has its own proper end, yet no creature can be an

absolutely ultimate end in itself. Since it is of the essence of a creature to have being *ab alio*, it is equally of the essence of a creature that its absolute and ultimate end be *ad alium*. As God is the beginning, so God must be the end of all creation. In summary we see that the natural order is the total of all that is necessary for the natural existence, the natural operation, and the natural end of all created beings, and secondly, that the natural order includes the presence and operation of God as Creator, Sustainer, Prime Mover, and Final End.

The Supernatural Order

Once, we clearly perceive what the natural order is, the meaning of the supernatural follows almost as a corollary. Just as the natural order embraces all that is necessary for the natural existence, operation, and end of creatures, so the supernatural is all that surpasses what is necessary for the natural existence, operation, and end of creatures. Let us not, however, make the mistake of confounding mere natural bountifulness with the super-

natural. The fact that God has provided man with a greater area of living tissue and a larger variety of food than are necessary for health, is strictly according to nature and is within the natural order, for there is place for divine liberality in the natural as well as in the supernatural order. The supernatural differs from the natural not merely in degree but in kind. Since the supernatural embraces that which surpasses the natural existence, operation and end of a creature, it denotes that to which a created nature has no right. In a word, the supernatural is an excellence or perfection of such a kind that it can never be due or proper to any creature of itself.

So as not to go astray, we must distinguish several classes of the supernatural. The relatively supernatural is a perfection which is above the nature of one or more divisions of created beings but is not above the nature of all created beings. For example, sentiency is above the nature of a plant but it is natural to man and brute; immortality is above the nature of

man but it is natural to an angel. Hence sentiency and immortality are only relatively supernatural. They are above the natures of some but not of all creatures. A more proper term for the relatively supernatural is the preternatural.

In contrast to the relatively supernatural or preternatural we have the absolutely supernatural, which is above the nature not only of some but of all creatures. The absolutely supernatural is subdivided into two classes: the absolutely supernatural as to mode and the absolutely supernatural as to substance. The former is an act which is natural as to the result which it produces but which is so distinctly supernatural in the mode in which it produces its result that it can have only God as its cause. For example, the instant return to life of a decaying corpse or the sudden calming by a word of an angry sea are cases of the absolutely supernatural as to mode; for while the results produced—a living body and a calm sea—are within the natural order, the mode by which these results are produced is above the powers

of a created nature. Another name for the absolutely supernatural as to mode, if we consider it in the concrete, is miracles.

We come now to the third and last division of the supernatural—the absolutely supernatural as to substance. In this kind of supernatural not only the mode of production but also the effect produced is above the whole nature and power and range of created beings. This is the supernatural in its strictest and most proper meaning. It is the supernatural in this ultimate and absolute sense that stands in highest contrast to the natural order. Of the supernatural in this third sense, that is, the absolutely supernatural as to substance, we have only three examples. They are: the hypostatic union of the divine nature with a human nature in Jesus Christ; grace; and the beatific vision. Since, however, grace and the beatific vision are related as means and end, neither can be studied in complete independence of the other; and just as it is the last book of the Bible that opens to us a fact left unexplained in the first book, viz., the fall of

the angels, so it is the beatific vision, the ultimate purpose and end and *raison d'être* of grace, that reveals to us the nature and awful dignity of grace. But as the beatific vision is itself a supernatural mode of knowing God, in order to grasp its significance, we must recall a few truths about knowledge and, particularly, about man's natural way of knowing God.

The First Act of a Spirit

The end of every being is the good, and every being attains its end or the good by means of its acts. The distinctive acts of an intelligent being are the act of knowing and the act of willing. By the act of knowing an intelligent being makes the good present to it; by the act of willing it takes hold of the good, cleaves to it, and makes it its own. Because of this fact the act of the intellect must always precede the act of the will. What is not known in any manner whatsoever cannot be loved. If you place the Bible and a fresh bone before a dog, he loses no time in choosing the bone. Why cannot animals love art and poetry and drama and science and virtue

and all that makes the civilized man? Clearly, because they cannot know these things. Why must all the joys of the mind be always shut out in this life from the experience of the perpetual idiot? Because his faculty of knowing is defective, and, not being able to know the things of the mind, he can not love and enjoy them.

A second vital truth is that for an intellectual being knowledge is not only the means but it is also the measure of love and joy and happiness. When an object is decidedly lovable in itself, the measure in which different beings know it will be the measure in which they love it. As between the Bible and his nursery book of rhymes and pictures, the child will choose the latter. But the mature person who really knows the Bible will always cherish it as the greatest book in the world. Love of itself could not achieve the high spiritual life of a St. Theresa. Such love as hers was excited by the kind of knowledge she received. Yes, the measure of knowledge is the measure of love. Since knowledge is an act or at least the result of an act and since

the nature of an act follows the nature of the subject of which it is an act, we must conclude that the knowledge of which any being is capable will depend ultimately on the nature of that being.

The Difference between Mediate and Immediate Knowledge

Now what has this to do with our problem? The application is easy and direct. The brute having only a sentient nature, can know only the material and the particular; man, because of the spiritual nature of his soul can know the immaterial and the universal. All things that are, though not the proper object, are yet the adequate object of man's knowledge. Consequently, man can know the universal good and can desire it. Since in God only is the universal good realized, God must be the ultimate end of man. If an intellectual being attains its end by its acts of knowing and willing, and if knowledge is the measure of willing or loving or enjoying, it follows that the extent to which an intellectual creature can attain to God as his natural end depends in the last an-

alysis on the extent to which he can naturally know God. What, then, is man's natural way of knowing God? To answer this let us scan, at least for a moment, the process by which man knows anything. When a man is born into this world, his mind is a blank, a tablet in which nothing is written. Natural knowledge has its beginning in the senses. The noblest of the senses, the faculty which with least trouble gives us the greatest and most varied knowledge of the world about us, is the sense of sight. Perhaps because of the excellence of this sense, the terms with which we describe its acts have come to be applied to every act of knowing, whether of the sensuous or the supersensuous order. When a man understands a thing he is accustomed to say that he sees it. This application of the term *seeing* to an intellectual act is not, however, a mere metaphor, but is more or less after the manner of an analogy. Just as in the sentient order there is the faculty of seeing and its proper object, and when the faculty and the object come into proper relation, sight or vision results; so also in the

supersensuous sphere, in the realm of the spiritual, there is the intellect, which is really the faculty of spiritual or intellectual sight, and there is the proper object of this faculty, and when the faculty and the object come into proper relation, the result is intellectual sight or vision. And as vision is the most noble and highest form of sensuous knowledge, so intuition or intellectual vision is the noblest and highest form of spiritual knowledge. Intuition is superior as a way of knowing to either reasoning or faith.

In our present life on earth the proper object of the intellect is the essence of material things. When from the data supplied by the senses the intellect has abstracted the essence of a material thing, that essence is as truly the immediate object of vision of the intellect as the material thing itself is the immediate object of the sense of sight. Now if the immediate proper object of the intellect in this life is the essences of material things, we might be led to believe that God, who is wholly spiritual and immaterial, cannot be known by us on

earth. This conclusion would be inescapable if immediate knowledge were the only kind of knowledge possible for the human intellect. But besides immediate knowledge our intellect is capable of mediate knowledge. Immediate knowledge results when the intellect as the eye of the mind directly sees its object; mediate knowledge is acquired when from the knowledge of things known by direct and immediate vision the mind rises to a knowledge of things that it does not and cannot see. A sense faculty by its very nature can have only immediate knowledge; it is one of the excellences of the intellect, on the other hand, that it can know both mediately and immediately. It is because of this double power of the intellect that we can have natural knowledge of God.

Let us take an example of how from immediate knowledge of visible things we arrive at mediate knowledge of God. For instance, I gaze at a beautiful flower; and as I gaze my mind reflects that the flower is an effect which must have a cause. Now

the cause of the flower must be either an effect from another cause or else self-existent. No matter how far back I push the series of effects and causes, I must say of any given cause that it, too, began to be and owes its existence to another, or it is uncaused. My mind sees that an infinite series of causes and effects is a contradiction in terms and is forced to conceive a self-existent Being Who is the cause of the flower and of all other things that began to be. An uncaused being must have within itself the reason and explanation of its own existence. Thus is evolved the notion of necessary, infinite being. By ascribing to this First Cause in an eminent mode all the perfections we see in the world about us, and by denying to this Being all the imperfections we see in the world, we come to a true and certain, if limited knowledge of the First Cause, who is God. We begin with immediate knowledge of sensible created things and by means of these we arrive at mediate knowledge of God. This is the natural way of knowing God. Though such knowledge is absolutely valid and trustworthy and exceedingly

noble and useful, it is—in view of the infinite knowableness of God—very, very imperfect knowledge of God.

Theologians teach that our natural method of knowing God in this life is in principle, though of course not in exact detail, the natural mode by which any creature knows God; that is, that the essence of God unlike a created essence can never be naturally the immediate object of intellectual vision of created minds. The natural mode by which all existing creatures know God, so the Church teaches, is through the medium of finite being. The two reasons St. Thomas advances to explain why this must be so are founded on the simple truth that the creature is always finite whereas God is infinite. The first of these reasons runs as follows: knowledge can exist only when the known thing is in some manner in the knowing subject. But for all creatures the natural way for the known thing to be in the knowing subject is by means of an image or likeness or *species*. Since God is an infinite Being, no image of Him—which would

have to be created and therefore finite reality—can ever adequately represent Him as He is. Hence any vision we should have by means of an image of God would fall short of vision of God Himself.* You may ask why it is that for all creatures the known thing (in natural knowledge) must be in the knowing subject after the manner of an image. The answer is not hard to discover. Since God is the First Cause of all things, all things can be said to be in

* In regard to the question whether in the act of seeing God face to face an image of any kind is formed in the mind of the creature, it may be well to call the attention of students of philosophy to a difference of opinion between St. Thomas and Suarez. According to St. Thomas no image is impressed on the human mind or generated within it, i.e., there is neither a *species impressa*, nor a *species expressa*. Suarez agrees there is no *species impressa*; but disagrees as to a *species expressa*. Even in knowing God by intuition the human mind does not have an infinite knowledge of God; the mind of God and the mind of the creature do not coalesce into one; the human mind must act with a finite, personal act, if there is to be human consciousness distinct from divine consciousness. This act of knowing God, considered on its subjective side, is a *verbum mentale* or *species expressa*. Even God, in the act of seeing his own nature, generates a *Verbum* or *Species Expressa*. The perfection of the act of knowing is in no way diminished by saying it takes place by means of a *species expressa*, for this *species* is nothing else than the spiritual act by which the intellect is aware it is seeing God.—EDITOR.

Him as in their First Cause. In His own essence God sees and knows all things. This mode of knowledge necessarily belongs to God alone, for He and He only is the First Cause of all things. This mode of knowing is closed to all creatures. There remain then only two ways by which the known thing can be in the knowing subject when the subject is a creature, viz., by actual physical inherence and by an image or *species*. Since the first of these two methods would lead to absurdity (as if the ocean could be in the mind of a child who looks upon it), the presence of the known thing in the knowing subject must be by way of image or *species*.

A second reason proposed by St. Thomas to show that no creature can by nature have immediate knowledge of God is founded on the principle: *quidquid recipitur ad modum recipientis recipitur*. In plain English this means that whatever is received is received according to the nature of the recipient. We need not take time to show that this principle is itself a resolution of the principle of causality. Since

God by His essence is subsistent, necessary being and since all creatures are contingent, in any kind of natural immediate knowledge God would be received into the knowing creature through a contingent mode; and God received through a contingent mode is not really God at all. Hence St. Thomas concludes no created mind naturally has an immediate knowledge of God.

It is of faith that all the intellectual creatures we know of, i.e., men and angels, do not have naturally, immediate vision of God. The question arises, however, whether God could create a being so exalted that by its natural cognitive faculty it would be able to know God directly. To this question Ripalda and a very few others give an affirmative answer. Against this opinion is arrayed the great majority of Catholic theologians. St. Thomas, indeed, argues only that neither men nor angels can have immediate knowledge of God, but his arguments are founded on the very nature of creatures and are applicable to every conceivable creature. Pohle states that the

proposition that no creatable intellect can naturally have direct vision of God, enjoys the certainty of a theological conclusion.

Chasm between Natural and Supernatural

Here is where the supernatural bursts upon us in all its dazzling splendor. God has destined man not to a natural but to a supernatural end. The immediate object of the natural intellectual vision of any creature must be finite. And yet, in elevating man to a supernatural end, God has destined him for the beatific vision, i.e., immediate intellectual knowledge of the divine essence itself. This truth, however staggering to our minds, is clearly and vividly taught us by God Himself in His revealed word. St. John says, "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."¹ St. Paul, contrasting the knowledge we have of God in this life with what we shall have in the next, says, "We see (God) now through a glass, in a dark manner; but then face to face."² This stu-

¹ I St. John III. 2.

² I Cor. XIII, 12.

pendous truth, clearly revealed in Scripture, has ever been firmly guarded and upheld by the Church throughout the ages. Yes, not any image or shadow or likeness of God, but the infinite, eternal, subsistent essence of God is the direct and immediate object of vision of all men who successfully attain their last end.

It must be evident to even the dullest of us that the difference between the knowledge of God that a created intellect acquires by its natural mode of knowing Him—through the medium of a finite reality—and the knowledge of God it acquires by immediate vision of His infinite majesty is so vast, so utterly incomprehensible that it almost paralyzes the mind to try to realize it. Moreover, since knowledge is the measure of love, supernatural love of God and the joy and happiness of possessing Him must bear a worthy proportion to beatific knowledge. St. Paul refers to the impotence of the human mind to appreciate the excellence of our supernatural end when he says: "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the

mind of man to conceive what God hath prepared for those who love Him"?³ How shall we compare by any definite ratio man's natural with his supernatural end? Shall we say that the natural knowledge of God of which the most perfect creature is capable when compared to the beatific vision of God is as the light of a candle to the overwhelming light of the sun? Shall we say that man's supernatural end is ten or a hundred or a thousand or a million or a billion times as great as his natural end? Provided we hold fast to the truth that the creature remains always a creature, always distinct from God, it seems impossible to exaggerate the incalculable difference between the natural and the supernatural end of man.

In our almost futile attempt to picture in a faint way the vastness of our supernatural end we may find help in another illustration. The sun is some ninety million miles away from us. Yet astronomers tell us that our distance from the sun bears the same ratio to our distance from the nearest

³ I Cor. II, 9.

star as four inches bear to a mile. If this is our distance from the nearest star, how shall we count the miles to the farthest one? Again, in making its orbit about the sun, our earth travels something less than six hundred million miles. To travel this distance the earth takes one year; light travels the same distance in less than an hour. If the speed of light is such that it travels this immense distance in less than an hour, think of how far light travels in a year. Yet when we get outside our solar system and begin to deal with inter-stellar measurements, the distances are so tremendously greater than anything we have experience of that astronomers are forced to use as their unit of measurement the light year, i.e., the distance light travels in three hundred and sixty-five days. And as if this were not enough, trustworthy astronomers tell us that there may be stars so far away from us that, notwithstanding the age of our planet, the light of these stars has not yet had time to reach us. In comparison with such space as this, our huge earth shrinks to the size of a little grain of sand. *Caeli enarrant gloriam Dei.*

May it not be that one of the lessons God would teach us with His stars is the lesson of the difference between our natural and our supernatural end?

The Function of Grace

Now what is it that so transforms and elevates human nature that it attains instead of a natural, a supernatural end? The answer is, grace. Our Lord Himself gives us a rule by which to judge of the worth of men and things: "By their fruits you shall know them." In other words, we can know the excellence of a cause from the excellence of its effects. If, then, we would perceive the nature and dignity of grace, we must see it in relation to the result it produces. Since grace brings it about that the direct object of the human intellect becomes, in the next life, the Infinite Being, we ought to realize that grace must have about it something of the divine and the infinite. Grace is that mysterious divine power which takes hold of a rational creature and elevates it so far above its own nature that it acquires a new mode of being and a new mode of acting

that bear an adequate proportion to the surpassing excellence of its supernatural end. Grace is the means by which God in His infinite wisdom and power bridges in a way the void between the finite and the infinite; for though a soul in grace still remains a finite being, it participates, nevertheless, in the nature of infinite being.

The Nature of Grace

With all this as a preparation, let us come now to consider grace itself. The word *grace* in its broadest sense means simply a favor. In its strict, orthodox, Catholic sense, grace is a supernatural gift bestowed by God on a rational creature as the means to a supernatural end. There are two points of this definition that need to be emphasized. First, grace is supernatural; it is above the essence, power, need, and end of the whole creation. Second, it is a gift—something to which the creature can have no right or claim whatsoever. It is an absolutely gratuitous bestowal by God. The two qualities we should associate therefore, with all kinds of grace are supernaturalness and gratuity.

That there are several kinds of grace is a fact, I trust, that all of you know. At this point the recollection of a principle we have already established will give us a cue to two kinds of grace. We have seen that a being attains its end by its acts and that the acts of a being follow the nature of a being so that between the nature of a being, the acts of a being, and the end of a being there must be a real proportion. Hence a creature in its natural state by its natural acts attains a natural end. Now in elevating the end of man to a supernatural plane, God has wrought a corresponding elevation of the nature and the acts of man, so that they bear a real proportion to man's glorious end. That grace which elevates the nature of man is called habitual grace; that grace which elevates the acts of man is called actual grace. Let us first consider the former.

The State of Grace

From the pronouncements of the Council of Trent and from the common teaching of theologians we may define habitual grace as a supernatural quality intrinsic-

ly and permanently inhering in the essence of the soul through which we are made sharers of the divine nature. An analysis of this definition will bring us much light. First, habitual grace is a quality and not a substance, as all qualities in creatures are accidents, not substances. Since grace is an accident, its whole nature is to be *in alio* and not *in se*, i.e. it is in a creature as in a subject and does not annihilate the created nature. This reveals a very important truth. Grace is not a substantial reality existing in itself, entirely apart from and independent of the natural order. No; the truth is far otherwise. Grace posits and presumes beings previously existing (by a priority at least of order if not of time) in the natural order in which it inheres. The whole purpose of grace is to elevate the created nature. Hence the supernatural and the natural are not two distinct substances united by some loose juxtaposition. Rather, the natural is the substance or subject in which the supernatural or grace as an accident or quality inheres. The fact, then, that grace inheres in the soul after the manner of a quality

reveals another very important truth. Though grace elevates the soul far above its natural state and produces a great change in it, that change is not a substantial one. Grace is a supernatural perfection which elevates without substantially altering the nature in which it inheres. In other words, the created nature, under the influence of grace, does not become a portion of the eternal substance of God, but remains a distinct substance, existing of its own right as a subject of its own acts.

Secondly, it is the distinguishing mark of habitual grace that it inheres in the very essence of the soul, whereas actual grace inheres in the faculties of the soul. Yes, habitual grace inheres in the essence of the soul and perfects the soul in the order of being. Habitual grace therefore perfects the entity of the soul and not its operations. Because habitual grace perfects the entity of the soul and because the entity of the soul is enduring, it follows that it is of the nature of habitual grace to abide permanently in the soul. Once habitual grace is infused into the soul, its na-

ture is to abide there forever unless driven out by mortal sin. By saying that grace intrinsically inheres in the soul, the Council of Trent makes it clear that habitual grace is a reality that transfigures the soul interiorly and that it is not some exterior thing that is outwardly imputed to the soul.

Finally, the definition is completed by the statement of the first and essential effect of grace. The function of habitual grace is to make us, in the words of St. Peter, "partakers of the divine nature."⁴ I wonder if we ever stop to realize when we hear these rather familiar words just what their tremendous import is. By grace we are made partakers of the divine nature. We, mere finite beings, by the mysterious liberality of God, participate in His infinite nature. According to Catholic tradition, this participation is not only moral but physical, that is, it consists not only in a certain imitation of divine perfections, but also in a perfection real in itself by

⁴ II St. Peter I, 4.

which as to essence and faculties we are rendered like unto God Himself. This participation is formal and not merely virtual. A formal participation is that by which the participated is found in the participant in the same manner as in the original, though in a different grade. That participation is called virtual by which the participated thing is found in the participant in a mode diverse from that in which it is found in the original. Now grace makes man radically fit to know God immediately and intuitively as God knows Himself, although of course, since the creature forever remains a creature, not in the same grade as that in which God knows Himself. In order to avoid all danger of pantheism we must emphasize the fact that this participation is accidental and not substantial. The divine nature is not communicated to us substantially as it is to the Word in His eternal generation from the Father, nor yet personally as it is to the human nature of Christ by means of the hypostatic union; but accidentally, in the sense that our souls are transfigured by divine influence—not, indeed, that they

become one substance with God. The soul is made deiform or deific somewhat as iron heated white hot, though still remaining iron, is made like unto fire and has some of the properties of fire. Briefly we may say that we participate in the divine nature physically and not merely morally, formally and not only virtually, but accidentally and not substantially. The divine nature which is in God substantially and necessarily, is in us accidentally and by His free gift.

Logically following from the truth that by grace we are participators in the divine nature is another truth of equal grandeur. For the reason that we are participators in the divine nature we are able to be called and are the sons of God. Because the divine nature is in us gratuitously and accidentally we are the adoptive and not the natural sons of God. The Word alone is naturally the Son of God because of His eternal generation in which the whole substance of the Father is communicated to Him. By nature no creature has the relation of son to his Creator. The essential

natural relation of every creature to God is that of servant. Do but recall the difference here on earth between the servant and the son in a household and then try to conceive the difference between being the servant and the son of the Infinite King of Kings. It is the part of the one to serve at table; it is the part of the other to sit at table with the father and be served.

Though we are only adoptive sons of God, this adoption is of a more excellent kind than adoption by an earthly father. Only he is the true son of his father who receives his nature from his father. When a man wishes to adopt a child as his own, he fulfills the conditions required by law. The result is that in all things the adopted son is considered as if he were the natural son of the adopting father and has all the rights that the natural son would have. Yet natural son he is not and can never be, for the fact remains always that he received his life and nature from a person other than his adopting father. Between such earthly adoption as this and our adop-

tion by God there is no true parallel, for in adopting us God not only gives us the dignity and the rights of sons insofar as these can be given to a creature, but He confers His own divine nature on us by grace in such a way that we enter into a union with God incalculably above the right and natural power of any creature.

I wonder if we Catholics ever seriously attempt to understand the majesty of a soul in grace. Do we not all too often by slovenly habits of thought, come to regard the state of grace as mere freedom from mortal sin? If we do, the vicious flaw in this attitude of mind is that we see as a mere absence or negation that which is a rapturous and abounding life. We should conceive of the state of grace not so much as the absence of sin as the presence of a divine reality. Nor is it correct, even in a negative way, to define the state of grace as freedom from mortal sin. A new-born babe, being incapable of a human act, is incapable of actual sin. Hence such a child is free from mortal sin, but it most certainly is not in the state of grace until it

has been baptized. Let us learn that the true antithesis is not between sin and grace, but between nature and grace. Picture the most perfect natural being you can, a being fulfilling to the letter the natural law, tending without any deviation to the natural end set for it by God. Now in comparison with such a natural creature place a soul in grace; the incomparable difference between the two successfully challenges any adequate expression in human language.

Perhaps an illustration will help a bit. The greatest of all creatures is Mary the Mother of God. She is God's masterpiece, the supreme achievement of His grace. Recall that she is above the seraphim and cherubim; she is nearest the eternal throne; she is the Mother of our Creator, the Mirror of Justice, the Seat of Wisdom, the Gate of Heaven, the Queen of Angels and of Saints. Eminent theologians, sane and conservative in their opinions, teach us that God most probably conferred on Mary in the first moment of her existence a greater grade of grace than on all the

myriads of the nine choirs of angels, than on all the apostles and martyrs and confessors and virgins, than on all the other members of the human race; in short, that Mary is richer in grace than all other creatures combined. Think, if you can, of how far Mary is above the least soul in the state of grace. Try to measure the distance between the Mother of God and the last and least of the children of God. Clearly this distance is so imposing, so nearly immeasurable as to be well-nigh beyond the grasp of the human mind. Yet the sobering truth remains that the distance between Mary and the least soul in grace—immense and awe-inspiring as it truly is—is almost nothing when compared to the distance between the least soul in grace and the highest angel in the state of nature. To say this, is not to dishonor Mary but to honor her most perfectly by estimating at its true value that which makes her what she is, viz., the grace of God. The reason this comparison is correct is that Mary and the least soul in grace have one essential thing in common: they participate in the divine nature. On the

other hand, the difference between the least soul in grace and the highest creature in its natural state is that the latter lives strictly within the natural boundaries of finite being, while the former is quick with an infinite life. A creature by nature is finite; a creature in grace, though always a creature distinct from God, has about it something of the infinite.

We have seen that it is peculiar to habitual grace that it inheres in the essence of the soul and perfects the soul in being. Now every living being acts through its faculties. Since in the natural order the faculties flow from the essence or nature of the soul and are the immediate principles of its actions, we might expect that in the supernatural order there would be something like supernatural faculties flowing from the supernatural being of the soul. Such is the case. Whenever habitual grace is infused into the soul, not only does it elevate the soul to a supernatural state of being, but it also endows the soul with supernatural habits from which the soul can elicit supernatural acts, just as in

the natural order it elicits natural acts from its natural habits. These supernatural habits are of two kinds: those that have God as their object; those that have the morality of our acts as their object. The former, three in number, are the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. As to the latter, since all the moral virtues may ultimately be reduced to the four cardinal virtues, it is commonly believed that with the infusion of habitual grace not only the three theological virtues but also the four cardinal virtues of justice, temperance, fortitude, and prudence are also divinely and supernaturally infused. These infused virtues, then, the theological and the moral, are so many supernatural habits of the soul by which it is proximately disposed to act.

Actual Grace

Let us recall a few simple truths. A being attains its end by its acts. No creature is its acts but is really distinct from them, and before they are elicited must be in potency to them. A thing in potency cannot reduce itself to act but must be

reduced to act by an agent extrinsic to itself. Hence in the natural order, the coöperation or *assistance* of that Being Who is pure act is necessary for any creature to be able to act. This truth has an analagous application in the supernatural order. Habitual grace infused into the essence of the soul constitutes the soul a supernatural remote principle of supernatural action. The infused virtues, which always accompany habitual grace, are so many supernatural powers of a supernatural principle (the soul in grace) and are the proximate principles of the soul's supernatural activities. But just as in the natural order so also in the supernatural, before a power can act, it must be reduced to act by a *concursum* of that Being Who is pure act. Since we are dealing, however, with the supernatural order, the natural *assistance* by which God moves all creatures to act is not sufficient. We must have a *concursum* that is proportionate to the supernatural state of the soul; we must have a supernatural *assistance*. This supernatural *concursum* of God is actual grace. Actual grace differs from habitual grace in several im-

portant points. Both are equally supernatural as wholly undue to any creature. Habitual grace, however, resides in the essence of the soul and perfects the soul in being. Actual grace resides in the faculties of the soul and perfects the soul in act. Habitual grace is by its nature permanent and persists as an entitative habit. Actual grace is transient, and perishes with the act it helps to perform.

I should be teaching heresy if I were to leave you under the impression that actual grace is merely a supernatural divine *con-cursus*. To say actual grace concurs with every supernatural act is to understate the truth. Its action is not only concursive but precursive as well. It goes before the act of the creature and by enlightening the mind and strengthening and alluring the will it first makes the act of the creature morally possible; and then, by its concursive influence, it makes the act of the creature physically possible. Thus grace is said to prevent as well as to concur. If now we take a comprehensive glance at the relation of grace to the soul, we see that

habitual grace inheres in the essence of the soul and perfects it in the order of being by elevating it to a permanent mode of existence far above its merely natural state. Concomitant with the coming of habitual grace into the soul is the infusion of the three theological virtues as supernatural habits of the soul. Finally, actual grace supplies that which is morally and physically necessary for a creature in a supernatural state through its supernatural habits to elicit truly supernatural acts.

By living worthily this life of grace on earth we can merit, when our time of trial is over, the ravishing joy and perfect happiness that come from beholding God as He is. Yet even a soul equipped with all the powers of grace that it has in this life is still incapable of that act so far above the nature of any creature—the immediate vision of God. It is of faith that when the time comes for the soul to behold the face of God, a new habit must be infused into the intellect, strengthening it and perfecting it so as to enable it to see an infinite object. This new habit is called *lumen*

gloriae, the light of glory. It is defined as a supernatural habit inhering in the intellect, elevating it and strengthening it for the intuitive vision of God. The Fathers of the Church commonly understand verse 10 of Psalm 35: "In Thy light we shall see light," as a reference to the light of glory. Moreover, even though, with the aid of the light of glory, we see God face to face and, therefore, know Him in the same perfect manner in which He knows Himself, we cannot know Him in the same degree or grade as that in which He knows Himself. We do not comprehend God; that is, we do not understand Him to an absolutely perfect extent. This is where we reach the limit beyond which no finite being can pass. No creature—not even Mary—can comprehend God. The Three Divine Persons alone perfectly comprehend the divine nature in all its limitless perfection.

Original Sin

This discussion of grace would not be complete without at least a few words about the historical place of grace in our Catholic religion. It is of faith that all

the members of the human race are descendants of Adam, the common father of us all. It is also of faith that before Adam sinned, he had been elevated to a supernatural state. Whether Adam was first created in a natural state and then later elevated to the state of grace or whether the acts of creation and elevation were simultaneous so that Adam did not exist until he existed as a being in grace is a disputed question. Since the time of St. Thomas, however, the latter opinion, viz., that Adam was elevated as soon as he was created, has been the common teaching of theologians. When we say Adam was the father of us all, we must get clearly in mind that he was not merely the first of our race in time, but was also by the plan of God the head of the race as well. Somewhat as all the members of a modern business corporation are to a certain extent answerable and responsible for the official acts of the head of the corporation, so similarly but to a much greater extent we as members of the race of which Adam is head and father feel for better or for worse, for weal or woe, the consequences

of his acts. Unfortunately, it is the woe we feel. Remember that when Adam was elevated to the state of grace, it was not he merely personally and individually that was so elevated—the whole human race in the person of its head was elevated to the supernatural state and destined to a supernatural end. Likewise, when God made a test of Adam's obedience and fidelity, it was not merely Adam personally, but the entire race in the person of its head that was on trial. Furthermore, when Adam fell, it was the whole of the human race that fell in him, its head, and the consequence of Adam's sin has been passed on to all his children.

Now what was the consequence of Adam's sin? It was that he lost for himself and all his children the heritage of supernatural life. The sin of Adam, which was personal in him, became original sin in his descendants. If Adam had remained faithful to God, his children would have been born in the state of grace, though of course each one could have lost grace by personal sin in his own life. Do we see now

what happened as the result of the sin of our first parents? In Adam's fall from grace the whole human race fell from grace. Though we still remained by the unchanged decree of God directed and ordered to a supernatural end, we had lost through the crime of our head the only means in the providence of God that could lead us to a supernatural end—the state of grace. Consequently, when each human being comes into the world, he is born, not in the state of grace, but in the state of nature, devoid of grace. Now this absence of grace in every soul as it comes into the world is not a negation but a privation; it is the absence of perfection where perfection strictly ought to be; it is evil; and since it is in the moral order, it is moral evil; it is sin. In this lies the essence of original sin; it is the lack of the wedding garment of grace that should adorn our soul and would adorn it were it not for the sin of Adam, our head. This, as you see, was the plight of the human race, destined to a supernatural end, held accountable for reaching that end, yet hopelessly unable to do so because in

Adam's fall it had lost grace—the means to the end.

Jesus Christ, the New Adam

God, if he had so willed, could have pardoned outright the sin of Adam and could have resored the human race to the supernatural state from which it had fallen. Infinite wisdom, however, chose to do otherwise. In an unsearchable mystery of justice and love God decreed that His only begotten Son, His Eternal Word, should enter into personal union with human nature, should be born of a virgin, should live a human life, and should die the terrible death of the Cross to repair the consequences of Adam's sin. The Gospels are the account of the minute fidelity with which the Incarnate Son carried out the decree of His Father. They are the story of how that which was lost by Adam was regained by Jesus Christ. But though Christ our Savior restored to us the supernatural heritage which Adam had destroyed, He did so according to his own plan. We have seen that as a result of Adam's sin all men are born deprived of

grace. This condition Christ allowed to remain. Though the race fell as a whole and though Christ redeemed the race as a whole, yet He willed that the Redemption should be communicated and made effective to each member of the race individually. To do this—to provide that the whole aggregate of grace that He had merited might be conveyed to each individual member of the race—Christ instituted the Sacraments, which, in the words of the Council of Trent, are so many channels through which grace flows into the soul.

Each Sacrament has its own proper function. Baptism is the Sacrament of regeneration, in which having been born once to nature, we are born a second time to grace. In this Sacrament the whole divine life of grace is planted in our soul. By Confirmation supernatural life is elevated to maturity; whereas we were children, we become men and soldiers. The Holy Eucharist is the divine food which nourishes and sustains supernatural life somewhat as material food sustains the body. Extreme Unction is the Sacrament

which fits the Christian for *bon voyage* in his going from this world to the next. Marriage and Orders are the social Sacraments. The former is God's way of securing in a holy and noble manner the continuance of the life of the human race on earth. By means of the latter God perpetuates the very life of the Church by providing an undying priesthood to rule, to teach, and to sanctify the faithful.

There is one other Sacrament, that of Penance, which is conspicuously the Sacrament of mercy. We have seen that in Baptism an entirely new principle of life is infused into the soul whereby it is elevated to a supernatural state of being and acting far above its natural state. Once this glorious new life of grace has been given to us, is it possible to lose it again? Alas, in His agony in the garden Christ saw all too clearly what was to happen. One single mortal sin kills the supernatural life of the soul just as surely as the guillotine kills the life of the body. It is no so-called pious exaggeration but, solemn, dreadful truth that a soul in mortal sin is

a dead soul—living and functioning, it is true, in its natural life, but dead to the supernatural life of grace. A soul in mortal sin is in a much worse state than a soul merely in original sin; for while a soul in original sin lacks proportion for its supernatural end, it does not deserve, and, therefore, God in His justice could not, according to the common opinion, inflict positive pain and torture upon it merely because of original sin. The case against the soul in mortal sin is much different. Not by the sin of origin from a fallen race, but by its own deliberate, perfectly-willed act of malice the soul in mortal sin has spurned and thrown away its supernatural life and has merited and deserved everlasting punishment in hell. Yet even for this extreme of hatred and rebellion Jesus Christ has provided a remedy. The Sacrament of Penance is a second plank after shipwreck, as it was called by the early Christians. This Sacrament is the ordinary means of regaining the state of grace for those who have lost it after Baptism.

The Mystery of Divine Love

This, then, is at least a glimpse at the dogma of grace as taught in the Catholic Church. As we ponder this amazing truth, the question naturally arises in our heart: Why has God done thus? Why has He not left us in the peasant hovel of our natural life instead of lifting us up to live as His own children in the mansions of His infinite glory? Why has He so ennobled us that instead of addressing us as servants He calls us friends and gods? To answer this is to attempt to explain the mystery of Infinite Love.

