

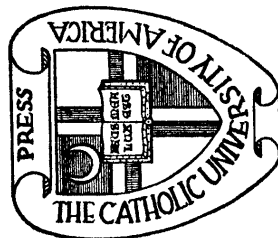
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Sacramental Penance in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries

BY THE
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FOREWORD

The Psalmist sounds the keynote for any consideration of the forgiveness of sin when he states that "all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth."¹ God's attributes of mercy and justice are involved both in the extra-sacramental and in the sacramental remission of sin. Even in the fulfillment of sacramental penance, in which God's justice is principally operative, the mercy of God supplies what man is unable to perform.

The present study is not an explicit review of these two divine attributes but rather an investigation of the teaching of the twelfth and thirteenth century theologians on sacramental satisfaction, in which God's mercy and justice toward men play the principal roles.

There is a certain amount of interest in any study of the development of a doctrine through these two centuries of theological growth. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries form the link between the early teaching of the Church on the one hand, and on the other the present doctrine as crystallized, in this case, by the Council of Trent. It is of great interest to inspect the link in order to discover what uniformity marked the theological teaching of those days.

The interest in such a study of sacramental satisfaction is intensified by two facts: (1) the Protestant denial of the necessity and value of satisfaction and satisfactory works; (2) perhaps as a result of that denial, a present-day reluctance on the part of man to embrace voluntarily any sort of pain, even as a just punishment for sin.

In the title of the study we have used the term *sacramental penance* as more in keeping with popular terminology. In presenting the doctrine of the theologians, however, we shall use the technical terms *satisfaction* and *sacramental satisfaction* as they appear in the various sources consulted.

¹ Ps. 24:10.

Foreword

For the purpose of greater understanding, a substantial sketch of the present doctrine on satisfaction will be included. Following the preliminary notions an investigation will be made into the available original works of the principal theologians of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Two observations concerning the thesis should be made here. First, we shall not attempt to include the doctrine as taught by all the theologians of those two centuries for two reasons: (1) many of the sources of the period are as yet unpublished; (2) the theologians who will be treated provide sufficient testimony for the doctrine of the time.

Secondly, we do not maintain that the present work exhausts the subject as treated by the theologians who will be considered. Some of the sources available have not been edited according to the modern standards of scholarship, and the doctrines found in these sources may well take on new meanings or undergo corrections when more critical editions appear. It may be added that much effort was being directed toward the production of critical editions of these works before the outbreak of World War II. Modern theologians will be encouraged to know that the work is proceeding in our own country and may well hope that it is being continued also in Europe or that it will be quickly resumed there when the blessings of peace have finally come.

The writer is pleased to extend his sincere gratitude to His Excellency, the Most Reverend Joseph Schrembs, S.T.D., late Archbishop-Bishop of Cleveland, and to His Excellency, the Most Reverend Edward F. Hoban, S.T.D., Bishop of Cleveland, for the privilege of an appointment to graduate research in Sacred Theology; to the Reverend Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R., S.T.D., for his patient and detailed supervision in the preparation of the thesis; to the Reverend Pascal P. Parente, S.T.D., Ph.D., for valuable critical suggestions and his approval of the thesis; and to all who aided and encouraged the completion of this study.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- CSEL—*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*
 DB—Denzinger, H.—Bannwart, C.—Umberg, I., *Enchiridion Symbolorum, Definitionum, et Declarationum de Rebus Fidei et Morum*
 DHGE—Baudrillart, A.—Vogt, A.—Rouziès, U., *Dictionnaire D'Histoire Et De Géographie Ecclésiastiques*
 DTC—Vacant, A.—Mangenot, E., *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*
 J—Rouët de Journel, M., *Enchiridion Patristicum*
 K—Kirch, C., *Enchiridion Fontium Historiae Ecclesiasticae Antiquae*
 PG—Migne, J. P., *Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Graeca*
 PL—Migne, J. P., *Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Latina*
 ZKT—*Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie*

CHAPTER I.

THE NATURE OF SATISFACTION

ARTICLE I. NOTION

The word *satisfaction* is derived from the Latin *satisfacere*. As a term, it was known and used before it assumed a fixed significance in theological language. An analysis of its usage discovers the following meanings:¹

In a general way, from the very force of the Latin term, *satisfaction* indicates every action by which a person does all that he must do, or every action or operation which a person performs as sufficient to attain an intended goal. This general sense of doing as much as is required has been particularized by usage. The usage in turn has been determined by the demands to be met or the goals to be attained.

1. Satisfaction of a claim, a request, or an expectation, made to a person or thing. Here a person performs all that is required for the fulfillment of the claim, request, or expectation. There is no reference here necessarily to a creditor or to moral guilt.

2. Satisfaction of a material debt. Here the usage is twofold: (a) satisfaction in the sense of actual full payment of money to a creditor; (b) satisfaction in the sense of a substitute for payment. Because of this second sense, payment and satisfaction are not necessarily convertible or interchangeable. One who pays a debt certainly makes satisfaction; but one who makes satisfaction does not necessarily make payment. For example, a debtor *pays* his creditor when he gives him the exact amount of money due. The same debtor, however, might *satisfy* his creditor in any way in which he can placate him so that he will not demand full payment, e.g., by inducing the creditor

¹ Cf. Deneffe, "Das Wort Satisfactio," *ZKT*, Vol. 43 (1919), pp. 158-175; Forcellini, sub voce *satisfacere*, *satisfactio*.

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to condone the balance of the debt on receipt of a partial payment.²

3. Satisfaction of a moral debt. Once again the usage is twofold. (a) In the case of an apparent or presumed wrong, a person is said to offer satisfaction through a defense, a justification, or an excuse. (b) In the case of a real or actual moral fault (offense, fault, wrong), the person who offends offers satisfaction by compensating for the offense or injustice he inflicts on another. Secular writers spoke of satisfaction in the sense of compensation for a moral debt, e.g., compensation by a servant for an offense against his master, compensation by a community for an offense against the representative of another community. The Fathers also used the term satisfaction in the sense of compensation for a moral debt made to men, to spirits, to false gods, to the Church, and especially to God.³ In addition to the general notion of compensation for a moral debt made to God, theologians explicitly began to distinguish satisfaction for guilt, satisfaction as a punishment for sin, satisfaction as one of the parts of the sacrament of Penance.⁴

4. (a) Vicarious satisfaction made by one person for another. (b) The vicarious satisfaction of Jesus Christ for all mankind, a use initiated by St. Anselm in the treatment of Redemption.⁵

ARTICLE II. SATISFACTION FOR SIN

The notion of compensation for a debt and for an offense

² Other examples would be satisfaction by bond, by security, by pledge. Cf. *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, Vol. I (ed. 14a; Berlin: Weidmann, 1922), *Digesta* (ed. Mommsen-Krüger), Lib. XIII, vii, 9-10; Lib. XX, vi, 6.

³ Cf. St. Gregory the Great, *Epistolarum*, Lib. IX, 5 (PL 77, 943); Tertullian, *De Pudicitia* [in Sammlung . . . von Dr. G. Krüger, *Tertullian, De Paenitentia, De Pudicitia* (im Breisgau: J. C. B. Mohr, 1891), p. 8, 6]; Arnobius, *Adversus Nationes*, Lib. 7, 6 (CSEL 4, 242, 3; PL 5, 1225); cf. *ibid.*, 38 (CSEL 4, 271, 7; PL 5, 1275); St. Augustine, *Enchiridion*, cap. 65 (PL 40, 263); Tertullian, *De Paenitentia*, cap. 7, n. 14; cap. 8, n. 9 (Preuschen, *op. cit.*, p. 13, 4; p. 14, 11); St. Cyprian, *De Lapsis*, cap. 36 (CSEL 3, 1, 264, 5; PL 4, 494); St. Leo the Great, *Epistola 108*, cap. 2 (PL 54, 1012).

⁴ Cf. Deneffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 163-169.

⁵ *Cur Deus Homo*, Lib. 2, cap. 6 (PL 158, 404); *Meditationes*, II (PL 158, 765 A-B).

The Nature of Satisfaction

3

should be retained and transferred to the sphere of man's relations with Almighty God. In this connection, satisfaction for sin is the reparation for sin, or that action which, by virtue of its compensatory value, obtains the removal and forgiveness of sin.⁶ A more complete definition theologically is: "Satisfaction is the action compensatory of the injustice committed against God through sin."⁷

In order to limit the field of consideration, it is necessary to recall the notion of sin and the results of sin in man's relations with God.

Sin is a morally evil human act; but since every human act is a free act, and every evil act is against the rule of morals which is the Divine Law, therefore sin is usually defined as a free transgression of the law of God.⁸

It may be further stated that a sin constitutes both an offense and an injustice against God. An offense is something done against the will of another. An injustice is a violation of the right of another. Because every mortal sin is opposed to the will of the Supreme Legislator and violates the strict right which He has to man's obedience and other expressions of homage, sin of its very nature constitutes both an offense and an injustice against God. Accordingly, every mortal sin "gives to God the motive of displeasure and the right to punish the sinner."⁹

In offending God man contracts a twofold debt which flows from the sin: the debt of guilt (*reatus culpae*) and the debt of punishment (*reatus poenae*). The debt of guilt is the obligation of undergoing the displeasure of God, which obligation arises from the personal offense against God, and hence against His

⁶ Cf. P. Galtier, *De Paenitentia* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1931), p. 358, n. 469; F. Cappello, *De Sacramentis*, Vol. II, *De Poenitentia* (ed. 3a; Turin: Marietti, 1938), cap. 8, a. 1, p. 235, n. 292.

⁷ L. De San, *Tractatus de Paenitentia* (Bruges: Beyaert, 1899), p. 662, n. 871; cf. D. Prümmer, *Manuale Theologiae Moralis*, III (ed. 8a; Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1936), p. 280, n. 391.

⁸ Noldin-Schmitt, *Summa Theologiae Moralis* (ed. 25a; Innsbruck: F. Rauch, 1937-1938), I, p. 285, n. 289, 1.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 286-287, n. 289, 2.

friendship, inherent in every mortal sin. The debt of punishment is the obligation of undergoing the punishment which God, as the author and guardian of the moral order, justly decrees against all who violate that order.

It is quite obvious that man, when he sins, opposes the moral order and disobeys the Supreme Legislator. It is just as true that, by sinning, man also averts himself from God. In this way especially does man offend and inflict a personal injustice upon God because he denies the honor due to and demanded by God as a strict right. Thus the sinner becomes God's enemy. Consequently, satisfaction for sin may be directed to the removal of the debt of guilt (and the debt of eternal punishment) or to the removal of the debt of temporal punishment (which can remain after the guilt and eternal punishment have been remitted).¹⁰

Satisfaction for the debt of guilt and the accompanying debt of eternal punishment occurs when something is offered to God by which the offense inflicted is repaired, or which is compensation and quasi-punishment for the offense.¹¹

For he properly satisfies for an offense who presents to the one offended that which he prizes as much as or even more than he hates the offense.¹²

Such satisfaction cannot be made by mere man because of the quasi-infinite malice of mortal sin as an offense against God. Hence, satisfaction for the guilt of mortal sin demands the atonement offered by a Divine Person. Jesus Christ, the God-Man, made such satisfaction for us. But in order that Christ's satisfaction may be applied in man's behalf, man must have contrition. Hence man's satisfaction for the guilt of mortal sin is really contrition, which of itself (with the intention of receiving the sacrament), or together with the actual reception of the sacrament of Penance (or Baptism in the case of an unbaptized adult), is a proximate disposition to justification.¹³

¹⁰ Cf. De San, *op. cit.*, p. 662, n. 871.

¹¹ Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 358, n. 469, 2.

¹² St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, III, q. 48, a. 2: "Ille enim proprie satisfacit pro offensa qui exhibet offenso id quod aequae vel magis diligit quam oderit offensam."

¹³ Cf. Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, cap. 4 (DB 897-898).

Satisfaction for the debt of temporal punishment occurs when a penalty is voluntarily undertaken with the intention of acknowledging and discharging the debt contracted, and thus restoring the order of justice disrupted by sin. The stress on voluntariness distinguishes satisfaction from mere objective expiation or payment of a debt such as is often demanded of an unwilling criminal or delinquent debtor. In this latter sense, a convicted criminal may *suffer justice*, but he does not *perform satisfaction*; similarly a debtor may have *compensation* taken from his effects, but he cannot be said to *satisfy* a just debt. In the same sense, souls condemned to hell or confined to purgatory cannot be said to make satisfaction, although they certainly suffer objective expiation.¹⁴

St. Thomas brings out this distinction between satisfaction and expiation quite clearly. He first lists various reasons why the justice of God, even after remitting the guilt and eternal punishment, obliges a penitent to temporal punishment for his past sin. Then he adds:

If (man) of his own will exacts that punishment of himself, by that act he is said to make satisfaction to God, in so far as he seeks with labor and pain, by punishing himself for sin, the divinely instituted order, which he had transgressed by sinning, seeking his own will. If, however, he does not demand this punishment of himself, since those things which are subject to divine providence cannot remain disordered, this punishment will be inflicted upon him by God; nor will such punishment be called satisfactory, since it will not be by the choice of the one suffering it, but it will be called purgatorial, because he will be, as it were, purged by another doing the punishing, while whatever was inordinate in him will be reduced to due order.¹⁵

¹⁴ Cf. Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 358, n. 469, 2.

¹⁵ St. Thomas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, III, 159: "Quam quidem poenam si (homo) propria voluntate a se exegerit, per hoc Deo satisfacere dicitur, in quantum cum labore et poena ordinem divinitus institutum exsequitur, pro peccato se puniendo, quem peccando transgressus fuerat, propriam voluntatem sequendo. Si autem a se hanc poenam non possint, haec poena infligitur providentiae subjacent inordinata remanere non possint, haec poena infligitur ei a Deo; nec talis poena satisfactoria dicitur, quum non fuerit ex electione

Therefore the *voluntary* assumption or acceptance of some punishment is of the very essence of all satisfaction. A man who spontaneously chooses a penance, or who at least voluntarily accepts one inflicted upon him, gives notice that he knows he is a debtor to divine justice and that he desires to conform himself to that justice. God is certainly pleased with such a disposition. For God does not favor punishment for its own sake, but only because of the order of His justice which demands punishment for transgressions. Hence God will favor also the recognition by man of that order of justice and the desire of man to restore that order as far as he is able to do so. It is by reason of such a voluntary disposition that God can and does at times remit the temporal punishment due to sin, without imposing on the repentant sinner every last iota of punishment (*satisfactio*).¹⁶

The present study is concerned with the satisfaction for the temporal punishment due to sin, a debt which flows from the injustice inflicted upon God through sin. For the present, moreover, we shall speak only of satisfaction in general or sacramental satisfaction. As such, satisfaction is an act of the virtue of penance and may be defined as the voluntary assumption or acceptance of penal works in order to secure the remission of the temporal punishment ordinarily due to sin even after that sin has been forgiven.¹⁷

Part of the equipment of the study of satisfaction is the distinction of the modes of satisfaction. Satisfaction is either *de condigno* or *de congruo*.¹⁸

Satisfaction *de condigno* is that to which the remission of temporal punishment is due out of justice. (a) Satisfaction is

patientis, sed dicitur purgatoria, quia alio puniente quasi purgabitur, dum quidquid inordinatum fuit in eo ad debitum ordinem reducetur."

¹⁶ Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 359, n. 470; cf. St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, I-II, q. 87, a. 6.

¹⁷ Cf. J. M. Hervé, *Manuale Theologiae Dogmaticae* (ed. 18a-19a; Paris: Berche et Pagnis, 1935-1936), IV, p. 358, n. 302; Prümmer, *op. cit.*, III, p. 280, n. 391; E. Hugon, *Tractatus Dogmatici* (Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1931), Vol. III (ed. 6a), "De Pœnitentia," q. 4, a. 3, p. 600.

¹⁸ Cf. Hervé, *op. cit.*, II, p. 583, n. 612; III, pp. 228-229, n. 209-210.

condign in strict justice (*in rigore justitiæ*) when there is *perfect* equality between the satisfactory work and the debt of punishment. In such a case the one making satisfaction does not accept any aid from the recipient of the satisfaction, but offers to the recipient a work of satisfaction produced by his own powers and not otherwise due. It is obvious that such condign satisfaction in strict justice can have no place in any consideration or relation between mere man and God. All man's satisfaction is made in virtue of God's help and with gifts already under the dominion of God and due to God by several titles.

(b) Condign satisfaction *de condignitate*, or simply condign satisfaction, is that in which there is a *true* equality between the work offered and the punishment due, but not between the one making satisfaction and the one receiving it; yet, supposing the aid and the acceptance of the recipient, the moral value of the work is such as to satisfy adequately for the debt of punishment.

Satisfaction *de congruo* is that to which remission of temporal punishment would correspond only because of the mercy or liberality of the recipient; or, more strictly, where satisfaction would secure remission out of friendship.

Condign satisfaction for the debt of temporal punishment will be the primary object of the following considerations. Its conditions can be verified in the relations between God and man. Whether or not they are verified will be discussed later.

ARTICLE III. WORKS OF SATISFACTION

In general it may be said that the works of satisfaction can be reduced to three classes: prayer, almsgiving, and fasting. This division is suitable for these reasons:¹⁹

1. Satisfaction as an act is one in which man subtracts something from himself in honor of God. But man has only three classes of goods with which he can part: those of the soul, those of fortune, and those of the body. In prayer, therefore, he subtracts from his goods of the soul (not, indeed, essentially, but insofar as he submits the faculties of his soul to God by using

¹⁹ St. Thomas, *In Librum IVum Sententiarum*, Dist. XV, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 3; *Summa Theologica*, Supplementum, q. 15, a. 3.

them for His honor); in almsgiving, from his goods of fortune; and in fasting, from bodily goods.

2. Satisfaction is intended to cut out the roots of sin. But man has only three such roots: the pride of life, concupiscence of the eyes, and concupiscence of the flesh.²⁰ Against the first, prayer is arrayed; against the second, almsgiving provides a remedy; and fasting helps to conquer the concupiscence of the flesh.

3. Satisfaction must close the door to the suggestions of sin or temptation. But there are three kinds of sins: those committed against God, against one's neighbor, and against oneself. Prayer opposes sins against God, almsgiving opposes sins against one's neighbor, and fasting opposes sins against oneself.

To these three classes must be added the ills and adversities of the present life, which are inflicted or permitted by Almighty God. When the one suffering such pains makes them his own, by patiently and voluntarily accepting them in punishment for his sins, they obtain satisfactory value.²¹ In fact it is usually more difficult for man to make his own a penalty inflicted by another than to choose a penalty of his own free will. In this connection it should be noted that even though the trials of the present life are not brought on by one's own free will, the acceptance or non-acceptance of these trials is a free choice for man. If he accepts them freely he offers satisfaction. The mere objective undergoing of the trials sent by God would be only *satisfactio*.²²

Practically every satisfactory work is easily related or referred to one of the three designated classes. For example, whatever praise or worship is offered to God may be classed as prayer. In like manner, whatever operates to the utility of one's neighbor—and is performed for that end—can be considered as almsgiving. And finally, since every bodily affliction is caused

²⁰ I John 2:16: "... because all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; which is not from the Father, but from the world."

²¹ Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, cap. 9 and canon 13 (DB 906, 923).

²² Cf. Prümmer, *op. cit.*, III, p. 280, n. 391; Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 358, n. 469, 2.

through the subtraction of some bodily good, whatever contributes to the affliction of the body is reduced or referred to fasting.

It should not be thought, however, that a penal or satisfactory work is limited to one class only. Such a work, one in itself, may in its aspects or effects be referred to more than one group. In this sense an individual by praying to God for the conversion of sinners would perform a work marked both as prayer and as almsgiving.

From what has been said, it follows that each class enumerated above will include many different works. Prayer includes every work of religion and piety pertaining to the worship of God. To almsgiving belong all the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. Finally, under the heading of fasting is included every act of internal and external mortification.²³

ARTICLE IV. THE EFFECTS OF SATISFACTION

Extra-sacramental satisfaction effects, *ex opere operantis*, the remission of the temporal punishment due to remitted sin. At the same time it punishes past sin and restores the order of justice disrupted by sin.

In a secondary degree, as suggested by the Council of Trent,²⁴ satisfaction also has a medicinal and preservative effect. As a medicine, satisfaction removes the remains of sins and counteracts vicious habits by acts of virtue. As a preservative, satisfaction removes penitents from the occasions of sin and makes them more vigilant against relapse into sin in the future.

²³ B. H. Merkelbach, *Summa Theologiae Moralis* (ed. 3a; Paris: Desclée, 1938-1939), III, p. 513, n. 557, 3.

²⁴ Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, cap. 8 (DB 904).

According to Catholic teaching, with the infusion of sanctifying grace the debt of eternal punishment is always remitted together with the guilt. Through sanctifying grace man is constituted an heir of heaven; hence it is impossible that he should be at the same time deserving of hell.²

In justification through the real reception of Baptism, not only the guilt and eternal punishment but also the entire debt of temporal punishment is removed.³ This point of faith, however, does not flow from the nature of justification but rather from the free will of God decreeing Baptism to be the sacrament of regeneration to a new life, effecting the complete obliteration of all that pertained to the life of sin.⁴ The remission of sins through martyrdom likewise brings with it the removal of the entire debt of temporal punishment. Nor does the Church deny that in Penance the whole debt of temporal punishment is *sometimes* removed, e.g., through the greater perfection of contrition.

The general law of post-baptismal justification, however, is that sin is forgiven (through contrition or the sacrament of Penance) in such a way that a debt of temporal punishment remains even after the remission of the guilt and of eternal punishment. Some temporal punishment is remitted in justification, but the amount varies, the reason being that the merits of Christ are applied in the post-baptismal remission of temporal punishment according to the dispositions of the penitent, and these dispositions vary in fervor.⁵

The doctrine that the debt of temporal punishment is not always remitted with the guilt is a matter of defined faith from the Council of Trent.⁶ It is likewise supported "by clear and out-

² Cf. De San, *op. cit.*, p. 665, n. 875. De San substantiates the remission of eternal punishment from Rom. 8:16. Cf. Council of Trent, Sess. VI, cap. 7, canons 10-11 (DB 799, 820-821).

³ Council of Trent, Sess. V, *Decretum super peccato originali*, 5 (DB 792); Rom. 6:4. Cf. Council of Trent, Sess. VI, cap. 14 (DB 807); Sess. XIV, cap. 8 (DB 904); Council of Florence, *Decretum pro Armenis*, (DB 696).

⁴ De San, *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*

⁵ De San, *op. cit.*, p. 666, n. 875.

⁶ Council of Trent, Sess. VI, cap. 14 and canon 30 (DB 807, 840); Sess. XIV, cap. 8, canons 12 and 15 (DB 904, 922, 925).

CHAPTER II

THE PRESENT DOCTRINE ON SATISFACTION

ARTICLE I. NECESSITY

The basis for the necessity of satisfaction is the fact that when the debt of guilt and debt of eternal punishment have been remitted, the entire debt of temporal punishment is not ordinarily removed. Hence satisfaction is necessary if man wishes to pay, in the present life, that debt of temporal punishment which remains.

Protestants generally hold that the debt of guilt is never remitted without the simultaneous remission of the entire debt of punishment, eternal and temporal. They even see a repugnance in the supposition that any debt of punishment should remain after the guilt is removed. As a consequence they deny both the necessity and the utility of satisfaction and satisfactory works.¹ In fact, their denials really sweep away the very possibility of any human acts which would have formally the value of satisfaction. The conclusion reached by them is well known: *optima poenitentia, nova vita*.

The Catholic doctrine is directly opposed to that of the Protestants. It may be stated thus: the sins of those who have fallen from grace after Baptism are so forgiven that, when the debt of guilt and of eternal punishment has been remitted, ordinarily some temporal punishment remains to be endured either in the present life or in the life to come.

¹ Cf. M. Luther, "Sermo: De Indulgentiis," in *Opera Latina*, ed. Dr. Henricus Schmidt, Vol. I (Frankfurti ad. M. et Erlangae: C. Heyder et H. Zimmer, 1865), p. 329; "De Captivitate Babylonica," *op. cit.*, Vol. V (1868), p. 85; P. Melancthon, "II Apologia Confessionis Augustanae, art. vi, De Confessione et Satisfactione," in *Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia*, eds. C. G. Bretschneider, H. E. Bindseil, Vol. XXVII (Brunsvigae: C. A. Schwetschke et Filium [M. Bruhn], 1859), col. 556; J. Calvin, *Institutiones*, Lib. III, cap. iv, 25, 30.

SACRED SCRIPTURE

Scripture testifies that God, after remitting the guilt of their sin, nevertheless inflicted temporal penalties upon certain sinners. The most notable example of this fact is King David.

II Kings XII, 13-14: And David said to Nathan: I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said to David: The Lord also hath taken away thy sin: thou shalt not die. Nevertheless, because thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, for this thing the child that is born to thee shall surely die.

The prophet Nathan had previously upbraided King David for his crime in plotting the death of Urias and for his sin of adultery with Bethsabee, the wife of Urias. Nathan had likewise threatened, in God's name, several punishments for those sins. David, filled with compunction, had then confessed his guilt in the sight of God. Finally the prophet, though he assured David that God had already forgiven his sin, foretold that nevertheless the child to be born of the illicit union would die in punishment of David's sin. The debt of guilt had been forgiven, but David through the death of the child.

In like manner God forgave Moses and Aaron, and yet they were excluded from the promised land;⁷ Adam suffered many punishments even though he was forgiven;⁸ the same principle is evident in various ills visited upon the Israelites for their sins even after forgiveness.⁹

These facts from Scripture prove that it is a general law that some temporal punishment is decreed by God for all sins, and that this debt of temporal punishment is not necessarily taken away together with the guilt and eternal punishment.¹⁰

⁷ Num. 20:6-12, 24-30; cf. Num. 27:12-14; Deut. 34:1-5.

⁸ Gen. 3:16-21; 4:1-2, 25; 5:1-5; cf. Wisd. 10:1-2.

⁹ Exod. 32:9-14, 27-28; Num. 14:11-23.

¹⁰ Cf. D. Palmieri, *Tractatus de Poenitentia* (Rome: Polyglott Press,

The argument for the existence of such a general law may be stated briefly: (1) The punishment inflicted upon the above-named sinners was inflicted justly and according to the sinners' debt of expiation for their sins; that is demanded by the justice of God Who, according to the Inspired Word, renders reward or punishment to everyone according to his works.¹¹ (2) But that punishment could not be said to have been inflicted justly on the sinners just mentioned which was not inflicted according to a general law of punishing even remitted sins; otherwise the punishment inflicted upon these sinners would have been inflicted solely on account of the sinners themselves and not on account of their sins. In such an hypothesis God would not render to the sinner according to his works but rather according to acceptance of persons. (3) Therefore the punishments inflicted upon the sinners named in the Scriptural evidence were inflicted according to a general law—there is a temporal punishment due to sins, and this punishment is not necessarily remitted together with the guilt and eternal punishment.

TRADITION

Tradition bears witness that the Church has always held this doctrine. That the Fathers, while treating of the fall and repentance of known sinners of the Old Testament, explicitly state that God exacts punishments for sins even after those sins are forgiven is admitted even by Calvin.¹²

I. Patristic doctrine on this point may be gathered under two headings.

A. The obligation of punishment is not cancelled automatically by the remission of the guilt of sin. St. Augustine points out that the evils of this life await men as punishment for sin.¹³ Sometimes, as in the case of David, special punishment comes

(1879), p. 412; Galtier, *op. cit.*, pp. 410-411; nn. 534-535; Hervé, *op. cit.*, IV, p. 362, n. 307.

¹¹ Cf. Ps. 61:13: ". . . et tibi Domine, misericordia: quia tu reddes unicuique juxta opera sua." Also: Prov. 24:12; Rom. 2:6; Matt. 16:27; II Cor. 5:10.

¹² *Institutiones*, Lib. III, cap. iv, 38.

¹³ *In Joannis Evang. Tract.*, 124, n. 5 (PL 35, 1972; J 1845).

in the present life even after sins are forgiven.¹⁴ St. Gregory the Great emphasized the reality of forgiveness even though punishment follows.¹⁵

B. In order that they may offer satisfaction to God for their post-baptismal sins, sinners must undergo laborious penance through corporal afflictions, fasting, watching, and almsgiving. St. Cyprian forcefully reminds the *Lapsi* of their obligation to do penance, an obligation arising out of their nudity in the supernatural order, from the examples in Scripture even of the just, from the perfidy of their sin. He describes the means to be taken and the results to be hoped for from God.¹⁶

II. That this penance was necessary even after the remission of the debt of guilt is shown not only by the individual testimony of the Fathers as listed above, but also and more clearly from the penitential discipline of the early Church.¹⁷ Without any attempt to determine the time of sacramental absolution (i. e., before or after satisfaction had been made), it is certain that in danger of death absolution was given to sinners before any satisfaction could be made. Yet such sinners, if they recovered, were bound to perform or complete the satisfaction due.¹⁸ In this practice appears the mind of the Church concerning satisfaction as the means to pay the debt of temporal punishment due to sin; otherwise no sufficient reason could be assigned for the obligation to complete satisfaction on recovery.

The doctrine on purgatory and the practice of praying, etc., for the souls of the faithful departed are based on the same principle.

REASON

Reason cannot prove the necessity of satisfaction as a means of removing the debt of temporal punishment. God certainly could remit both guilt and the entire debt of punishment at the same

¹⁴ *Enarratio in Psalmum L*, 15 (PL 36, 595).

¹⁵ *Liber Moralium*, IX, cap. 34, n. 54 (PL 75, 889; J 2309).

¹⁶ *De Lapsis*, cap. 35 (CSEL 3, 1, 262, 22); cap. 36 (CSEL, 3, 1, 264, 5).
¹⁷ Cf. Council of Nicaea (I), *De baptismo haereticorum et moribundorum viatico*, canon 13 (DB 57); St. Innocent I, *De reconciliatione in articulo mortis* (DB 95).

¹⁸ Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 411, n. 536; cf. pp. 190-192, nn. 264-265.

time. Reason can show how fitting it is that a debt of temporal punishment should remain. In general, God ought to have provided a means of forgiveness of sin by which He would act "not only as a private friend or merciful Father, but also as a just judge and public legislator." As Father, God forgives the guilt and eternal punishment gratuitously through the merits of Christ; as Judge, He safeguards the order of justice by imposing temporal punishment on sin and demanding satisfaction for it.¹⁹ The Council of Trent lists several other special reasons of congruity for satisfaction.²⁰

OPINIONS OF THEOLOGIANS

Theologians agree unanimously concerning the *fact* that a debt of temporal punishment ordinarily persists after the remission of the guilt and eternal punishment. They do not agree as to the reason why this fact is possible.

Vasquez makes two statements, neither of which is a real argument from reason for the point in question. (1) Failing to understand the *a priori* reasons given by Vega and St. Thomas, Vasquez announces that he finds the reason *ex natura rei* in an *a posteriori* deduction from the nature of justification as described by the Scriptures and by the Fathers.²¹ (2) Vasquez also states that the persistence of a debt of temporal punishment can be understood from the fact that a justified man can owe a debt of temporal punishment for venial sins.²²

(3) Scotus and others find the reason in the commutation of the eternal punishment into a temporal punishment by God at the time when He remits the guilt of the sin.²³

(4) St. Thomas teaches what is now regarded as the true and

¹⁹ Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 413, n. 538; cf. Palmieri, *op. cit.*, pp. 407-408.

²⁰ Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, cap. 8 (DB 904).

²¹ *In III Partem Sancti Thomae*, t. IV, q. 94, a. 1, dubium 2, nn. 5-6.

²² *Ibid.*, n. 4.

²³ *In IVum Librum Sent.*, Dist. XIV, q. 4, n. 10; Dist. XXII, q. unica, n. 21. Among the theologians who hold the same view, at least in substance, the following may be noted: Alexander of Hales, *Summa Theologiae*, Pars IV, q. 14, m. 2, a. 1, n. 3 (p. 468, 2); q. 16, m. 1, a. 2 (p. 505, 1); Durandus, *In Lib. IV Sent.*, Dist. XV, q. 2, n. 9; Dominicus Soto, *In Lib. IV Sent.* (T. I), Dist. XIX, q. 1, a. 4.

common opinion. He states that two elements are found in every mortal sin: (a) aversion from the unchangeable good, Almighty God, by reason of which the sinner incurs the divine enmity and a debt of eternal punishment; (b) an inordinate conversion to changeable or created good, which of itself brings only a debt of temporal punishment.

In post-baptismal justification, when sanctifying grace is infused into the soul, the aversion of the soul from God is taken away and the soul is restored to the friendship of God through the union of grace. As a consequence, the debt of eternal punishment corresponding to that aversion from God is removed. The return of divine friendship, however, does not necessarily remove the deordination which results from the conversion to changeable good. Therefore neither does the return of divine friendship necessarily take away the debt of temporal punishment corresponding to that conversion.²⁴

ARTICLE II. POSSIBILITY OF SATISFACTORY WORKS

Man can make condign satisfaction for the debt of temporal punishment which ordinarily remains after the remission of the guilt and the eternal punishment. In arriving at this succinct statement of Catholic doctrine, several principles should be recalled:

1. Man can satisfy *de congruo* for his sins in general. This principle applies both to justified man and to the sinner who "under and with the help of grace prepares for himself the way to justification."²⁵ As stated, this principle is theologially certain.

2. Man cannot satisfy *de condigno* for the offense against God caused by mortal sin. The Council of Trent expressly excludes the possibility of the sinner offering condign satisfaction for the guilt of mortal sin: "... and we are therefore said to be justified gratuitously, because not one of those things which precede justification, whether faith or works, merits the grace of justification."²⁶ Common opinion of theologians excludes the possibility of a

²⁴ St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, III, q. 86, a. 4.

²⁵ Cf. Galtier, *op. cit.*, pp. 359 ff., nn. 471 ff.; cf. Council of Trent, Sess. VI, cap. 5 and 6 (DB 797-798).

²⁶ Council of Trent, Sess. VI, cap. 8 (DB 801).

justified man offering condign satisfaction even for the previously forgiven guilt of mortal sin. The intrinsic malice of every mortal sin exceeds by far any compensation which might be offered by the mere man: the dignity of God Who is offended is infinite; the dignity of a justified man remains finite.²⁷ It seems probable, however, that a justified man could satisfy *de condigno* for the guilt of venial sin.

3. The assertion of the possibility of satisfaction for temporal punishment supposes that the same conditions are required for condign satisfaction which are demanded for condign merit, plus the penal aspect of the good work.

4. The temporal punishment for which man can offer satisfaction is especially the punishment of purgatory. It may refer, however, to any of the punishments of this life which are not decreed absolutely by God.²⁸

5. For the present, all that is intended is that man's satisfaction for the temporal punishment due to already remitted sin may be condign *ex opere operantis*.

Protestants, just as they deny the necessity of satisfaction, deny also the utility of any human acts toward that end since they strip them of any satisfactory value.

Catholic doctrine can be summarized in two parts.

I. Man can make satisfaction for the temporal punishment due to sin. This is a matter of faith from the Council of Trent.²⁹ It follows logically from the fact that God is willing to accept man's works of penance in compensation for the debt of temporal punishment.

SACRED SCRIPTURE

The Sacred Writings testify that God has promised to remit punishments and even sins themselves if men offer to Him works of penance.

²⁷ Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 362, n. 475; cf. L. Billot, *De Verbo Incarnato* (ed. 7a; Rome: Gregorian University, 1927), Thesis II, pp. 25 ff.

²⁸ Cf. Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 363, n. 476; Pohle-Preuss, *The Sacraments*, Vol. III, *Penance* (4th ed.; St. Louis: Herder, 1924), p. 225.

²⁹ Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, cap. 8-9 (DB 904-906); canon 13 (DB 923).

II Paralipomenon VII, 13-14: If I shut up heaven, and there fall no rain, or if I give orders, and command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people: and my people upon whom my name is called, being converted, shall make supplication to me, and seek out my face, and do penance for their most wicked ways: then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins and will heal their land.

The occasion of these inspired words followed the celebration of the completion of the temple and the solemnity. Previous to the feast Solomon had prayed to the Lord for continued forgiveness of his people's sins upon repentance (cf. VI, 36-39). Here the Lord appears to Solomon by night and promises to forgive the sins of the people and to withdraw the punishments visited upon their land, provided that they are converted and prove their conversion in supplication and penance.

The same doctrine appears in other passages. Daniel shows Nabuchodonosor the humiliations promised in the king's dream, and urges him to works of penance in recompense for his sins of pride and as a means of avoiding divine punishment.³⁰ Tobias deliver his son to be good to the poor and to give alms, "for alms to go into darkness."³¹ St. John the Baptist orders the people to bring forth fruits which demonstrate their repentance as the only way in which they can flee "from the wrath to come."³²

TRADITION

1. The Fathers teach that works of penance placate the wrath of God, obtain mercy and the condonation of punishment. The punishment involved in this kind of work is the reason why God will remit further punishments.³³

³⁰ Dan. 4:16-24.

³¹ Tob. 4:7 and 11.

³² Luke 3:7-8. Cf. I Cor. 11:32.

³³ Cf. F. Pignataro, *De Disciplina Poenitentiali Priorum Ecclesiae Saeculo-*

Iosepho, 1904, cap. 3, esp. pp. 57-58: "Satisfactio Deo per opera poenitentiae exhibenda maximi momenti censebatur a Patribus, ita ut omnes exhortationes ad poenitentiam fere unice versentur circa eiusmodi opera satisfactoria, quibus peccator curaret vulnera, quae peccatum in eo reliquerat."

For example, Tertullian points to the fulfillment of penance as the price of pardon and the compensation by which remission of punishment is attained.³⁴ A Christian should be ashamed to fall into sin after Baptism but not ashamed to repent anew; for thus he can be reconciled to God Who is willing to accept his satisfaction.³⁵ Exomologesis (confession) not only produces interior penance by which God is appeased, but also satisfies for divine punishments by temporal affliction according to this rule: "*In quantum non peperceris tibi, in tantum tibi Deus, crede, parcat.*"³⁶

St. Cyprian announces the same truth in an exhortation to the *Lepsi* to do works of penance according to the prescriptions which God has given to men. It is of great importance to act now "while satisfaction and remission (accomplished) through the priests is pleasing to the Lord."³⁷ St. Augustine urges Christians who fall into sin to punish themselves and thus avoid punishment by God.³⁸ The Church removes sinners from the "society of the altar" in order that they may placate God by repentance and punishment of themselves; to the sinner who does not spare himself God grants pardon.³⁹ A last bit of evidence is offered by St. Gregory the Great. The sinner, guilty of illicit acts, must "strive to abstain also from certain licit acts, since through this [abstinence] he may make satisfaction to his Maker."⁴⁰ Moreover, the mere cessation from evil does not constitute satisfaction. Satisfaction is made by punishing the past evils with suitable lamentations.⁴¹

2. The practice of the Church likewise supposes that God is willing to accept the works of penance in compensation for the temporal punishment due to sins. The Church has always urged

³⁴ *De Paenitentia*, cap. 6, n. 4 (Preuschen, *op. cit.*, p. 9, 7).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, cap. 7, nn. 13-14 (Preuschen, *op. cit.*, p. 13, 1).

³⁶ *Ibid.*, cap. 9, nn. 1-6 (Preuschen, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15); cf. Pignataro, *op. cit.*, cap. 1, p. 7.

³⁷ *De Lapsis*, cap. 29 (CSEL 3, 1, 258-259; K 263); cf. *ibid.*, cap. 32-36 (CSEL 3, 1, 260-264).

³⁸ *Sermo 20*, 2 (PL 38, 139; J 1494).

³⁹ *Epist. 153*, 3, 6 (CSEL 44, 401, 5; J 1434).

⁴⁰ *In Evang. Hom. XXXIV*, 16 (PL 76, 1256).

⁴¹ *Regula Pastoralis III*, 30 (PL 77, 111).

all the faithful to daily penance and has made certain that sinners performed penance due to their sins. The Liturgy is replete with prayers begging remission of punishment for departed souls. With true wisdom the Church sets aside seasons of penance during the year.

II. Man can offer *condign* satisfaction for the temporal punishment due to remitted sins. That the penal works of a man in the state of grace can constitute a *condign* recompense for the debt of temporal punishment is theologically certain. The conclusion is drawn from the condemnation of two propositions of Michael Baius (du Bay) in the Bull of St. Pius V, *Ex omnibus afflictionibus*, of October 1, 1567.⁴²

Three considerations will help to confirm the Catholic position. 1. The good works of one in the state of grace can merit *de gloria* in that life.⁴³ This fact supposes a value in those works those good works as penal would have much greater value toward the attaining of the much less precious objective of the remission of temporal punishment.⁴⁴

2. The moral value of the penal works of the just is equal to the moral value of the temporal punishment due. For the moral or its suitability in attaining its purpose. Now God inflicts temporal punishment for two reasons: (a) to restore the order of justice disrupted by sin; (b) to maintain that order by discouraging the violation of the law by others. The penal works of the just man, under the necessary conditions, are apt to fulfill that

⁴² *Errores Michaelis du Bay (Baii)*, n. 59: "Quando per elemosynas aliaque poenitentiae opera Deo satisfacimus pro poenis temporalibus, non dignum pretium Deo pro peccatis nostris offerimus, sicut quidam errantes autumant (nam aliqui essemus, saltem aliqua ex parte, redemptores) ; sed aliquid facimus, cuius intuitu Christi satisfactio nobis applicatur ; sed non valent expiare de condigno poenam temporalem restantem post culpam condonatum" (DB 1059) ; n. 77: "Satisfactiones laboriosae justificarum condonatum" (DB 1077).

⁴³ Council of Trent, Sess. VI, canon 32 (DB 842) ; cf. *ibid.*, cap. 10 and canon 24 (DB 803, 834) ; cap. 16 and canon 26 (DB 809, 836).

⁴⁴ Cf. Palmieri, *op. cit.*, p. 423.

twofold purpose: (a) by them the sinner recognizes his violation, his debt, and strives to do what he can to restore the order he has violated; (b) the fact that a debt of punishment remains even for the justified sinner is a deterrent to others. Hence, it is correct to say that satisfactory works procure the remission of temporal punishment *de condigno*.⁴⁵

3. The inequality between the penal works voluntarily undertaken and the temporal punishment due is no obstacle to *condign* satisfaction. The inequality is a material difference between one penalty and another; it would be an obstacle were this a question of the mere objective sustaining of punishment (*satisfactio*) rather than *satisfactio*. Satisfaction, however, is in the moral order. The moral worthiness of the one making satisfaction—a worth flowing from his intention and especially from the presence of sanctifying grace in his soul—is so great that the disparity between the penal works he offers and the punishment actually due is adequately neutralized. The presence of that good intention and sanctifying grace in the just man gives God reason to remit *de condigno* some of the debt of temporal punishment without detracting from His love of justice.⁴⁶

It should be noted here that the ability to offer *condign* satisfaction for the temporal punishment does not, as Baius contended, make man in some way his own redeemer. Man satisfies *de condigno* not for the guilt or eternal punishment, but only for the temporal punishment. Moreover, he can only make satisfaction for the temporal punishment by reason of the merits of Jesus Christ from which he receives justification and the power to act supernaturally. The satisfaction of man, while belonging truly and properly to him, also belongs to Christ "in so far as it has dignity and value only from the previous satisfaction of Christ."⁴⁷ This is what the Council of Trent intended in the statements "*in Christo . . . in quo satisfacimus*," and "*. . . satisfactioes quibus poenitentiae per Christum Jesum peccata redimunt*."⁴⁸

III. The common teaching of theologians also states that man

⁴⁵ Cf. Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 367, n. 482 B.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, n. 482 C.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 368, n. 483.

⁴⁸ Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, cap. 8 and canon 14 (DB 904, 924).

in the state of grace can offer condign satisfaction for his own venial sin. Man can make this satisfaction not only for the debt of temporal punishment but also for the guilt or offense of venial sin.⁴⁹ Two considerations may be offered in proof of this teaching:

1. The doctrine of St. Thomas concerning the difference between mortal sin and venial sin.⁵⁰ Mortal sin is so great a deordination that it constitutes an aversion from God and blasts from the soul the intrinsic vital principle of grace. Therefore mortal sin is irreparable *ab intrinseco*. Venial sin is a deordination, but not great enough to involve aversion from God (*citra aversionem*). It does not remove the intrinsic vital principle of supernatural life from the soul and hence remains repairable *ab intrinseco*. To be able to repair the moral deordination of venial sin is certainly to be able to offer condign satisfaction for it.

2. The doctrine of St. Thomas concerning the nature of a venial offense against God.⁵¹ Venial sin is a conversion to some created good by which supernatural charity, though not excluded or diminished in itself, is impeded or retarded in its act—man does not direct himself to God with as much fervor and promptness as he should. That is why venial sin is said not to cause a blemish on the soul but only to dull the lustre which would result from a fervent act of charity.

This defect of fervor and promptitude can be supplied or compensated by the fervor and promptitude of an act by which man is impelled toward God in such a way as to withdraw himself from some licit created good to which he might otherwise cling.

To demonstrate completely how God wills to accept such compensation as pleasing to Him and to explain fully the remission of venial sins is beyond the scope of the present study.⁵² For our purpose it is sufficient to recall the explicit promise of Sacred

⁴⁹ Cf. F. Suarez, *Opera Omnia* (Paris: Vivès, 1856-1878), T. XVII, disp. IV, sect. xi, nn. 1-7; Salmanticensis, *Cursus Theologicus* (Paris: V. Palmé, 1870-1883), T. XIII, tract. XXI, disp. I, dub. 5, q. 1; Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 368, n. 484.

⁵⁰ St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, I-II, q. 72, a. 5; q. 88, a. 1.

⁵² Cf. Galtier, *op. cit.*, pp. 418-421, nn. 546-552, for treatment of the remission of venial sins.

Scripture: "If we acknowledge our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all iniquity."⁵³ If that promise has any force, "at least and especially concerning venial sins" should it be understood.⁵⁴

ARTICLE III. THE CONDITIONS OF SATISFACTION

Satisfaction has been shown to be necessary for the remission of the temporal punishment due to sin. It has been shown to be possible to man as a means of securing that remission of temporal punishment. Satisfaction, however, is only possible under certain conditions.⁵⁵

When the possibility of satisfaction was discussed earlier, it was said that not every man could perform condign satisfaction, but only that man who is capable of condign merit. In other words, the conditions of condign merit are also the conditions of condign satisfaction.

1. On the part of God there must be acceptance. Actually man cannot offer anything to God to which remission of punishment would be due in strict justice, since all man's works must be made with goods or gifts which already belong to God and have been bestowed by God upon man. Even those works that are proportioned to their supernatural goal through grace cannot constitute a claim to remission of temporal punishment, unless God agrees to accept those works toward that end.

This quality or condition has already been shown to be present in God's willingness to remit temporal punishment in return for the recompense offered by man through penal works.

2. On the part of man making satisfaction, two conditions must be fulfilled:

(a) actual present life: the time of merit and of satisfaction ends with the close of man's period of probation.

⁵³ I John 1:9.

⁵⁴ Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 370, n. 486.

⁵⁵ Cf. Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 362, n. 476; Noldin-Schmitt, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 104-113; nn. 96-104; Merkelbach, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 494-495, n. 543; Hugon, *op. cit.*, Vol. II (ed. 8a), "De Gratia," q. 7, a. 1, pp. 255-260; A. Tanqueray, *Synopsis Theologiae Dogmaticae* (ed. 24a; Paris: Desclée, 1933-1938), III, pp. 187-194, nn. 256-265.

(b) the state of grace: as already mentioned, the satisfactory value of all man's works depends in the last instance upon God's acceptance of what man can offer. Yet God accepts no work unless the worker be pleasing to Him, and only a worker who enjoys the state of grace and its consequences in the supernatural order, such as adopted sonship, friendship with God, and divine inheritance, can be pleasing to God.

The Council of Trent has assured uniformity among theologians in positing this condition for satisfaction. In explaining just how man can make satisfaction the Council states:

Neither is this satisfaction which we discharge for our sins so our own as not to be through Christ Jesus; for we who can do nothing of ourselves as of ourselves, can do all things with the cooperation of Him who strengthens us. Thus man has not wherein to glory, but all our glorying is in Christ, in whom we live, in whom we merit, in whom we make satisfaction, *bringing forth fruits worthy of penance*, which have their efficacy from Him, by Him are offered to the Father, and through Him are accepted by the Father.⁵⁶

The Council definitely states that man can offer satisfaction precisely because he lives in Christ. Galtier explains this statement as follows: "And indeed, even our penal actions do not have of themselves a material proportion of equality by which they can compensate for greater punishments, e. g., purgatory, due to sin; therefore that proportion must accrue to them from their moral value. Now such a value cannot accrue to them from their dignity of the person, that is from sanctifying grace, from divine sonship, from union with Christ."⁵⁷

3. On the part of the work offered as satisfaction there are four conditions:

(a) It must be free: that is, it must flow from the choice of the will without any internal or external necessity; otherwise it cannot be a human act. As noted in the first general section, voluntariness is of the very essence of all satisfaction. Without it, there would be no distinctive element by which satisfaction

⁵⁶ Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, cap. 8 (DB 904).

⁵⁷ Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 362, n. 476, and footnote no. 2.

would differ from forced punishment. Palmieri adds two further reasons: "Indeed satisfaction is a kind of moral effect . . . and is founded in the moral value of the work, just as merit is; but without liberty there is no moral being in acts. Besides, satisfaction is an act of the virtue of penance, to the essence of which virtue pertains the voluntary detestation and punishment of sins."⁵⁸

(b) It must be a good act: which is evident since the opposite would be absurd, namely, that satisfaction might be made to God through an act which is evil and thus offends Him.

(c) It must be supernatural both by reason of its principle and by reason of its motive: that is, it must proceed with the help of actual grace and be directed by a motive made known by faith. By satisfaction man seeks to progress toward his eternal supernatural goal by removing an obstacle to its earlier possession; only grace can give those satisfactory acts a proportion to that supernatural goal. The common opinion is that actual grace is required for each satisfactory act, since even a justified man can perform no action in the supernatural sphere without actual grace. The reason for that opinion is that habitual or sanctifying grace and the infused virtues do not directly move to action; hence actual grace is necessary for that motion to a supernatural act.

The motive must be one made known by faith in order that the work may be truly directed toward man's supernatural goal, that is, directed toward God and eternal life. It would not seem necessary that the motive be charity as merit demands, if for no other reason than this—if charity were demanded, then the specific act of the virtue of penance could never of itself achieve its own end.

(d) It must be penal: (1) because in sin a person over-indulges his will, he cannot offer recompense for sin "through return to the equality of justice, except in so far as the operations which

⁵⁸ Palmieri, *op. cit.*, p. 427: "Sane satisfactio est moralis quidam effectus, ut ait Suarez D. XXXVII, Sect. 3, et in morali valore operis fundatur, sicut meritum; sine libertate vero nullum est esse morale in actibus. Praeterea, satisfactio est actus virtutis poenitentiae, de ratione autem virtutis est ut sit voluntaria detestatio et vindicta peccatorum."

one exhibits in compensation are performed to a certain degree against the natural inclination of the will, and in that degree penal and laborious;" (2) since one who injures the right of another is held to restore the equality of justice by adding to the goods of the injured party and subtracting from his own; man subtracts from his own goods "in so far as he imposes upon himself penal and laborious works."⁵⁹

To state the case in a slightly different way, it may be said that a work to be truly satisfactory must both repair the injustice and preserve from future sin. Penal works alone can ordinarily achieve that twofold result.

A penal work makes compensation for the injustice committed against God. Although God in Himself cannot have any good subtracted from Him, nevertheless the sinner, so far as he is concerned, does take away some of the honor due to God by giving himself more than justice allows; he over-indulges his own will and finds more delight than he should in created goods. For that reason, the sinner can effect compensation only when he takes something away from himself in honor of God. Now any good work gives honor to God, but only a penal work actually takes something away from the sinner. A good work, as such, would not accomplish that subtraction, because it would really perfect the sinner through an increase of grace and merit. Hence the deprivation can only be achieved through the good work in so far as it is penal, that is, in so far as something is taken away from the sinner. This is accomplished both by his accepting tribulations patiently or by performing something against the natural inclination of his will, and also by his depriving himself of some created good in which he ordinarily might find utility or pleasure.

From all this it follows that if it were possible for a work to be good and not penal, it would be only meritorious and not satisfactory. As a matter of fact, every good work is penal for man in his fallen state, that is, is penal to fallen human nature. As a result of original sin, man tends to fallen human nature. As earthly goods. When he acts supernaturally for the honor of God, he performs a work which is in some degree arduous and

laborious and therefore penal. This would be even more apparent in a case of assignment of that work as a penance.

Penal works also prevent future sin. Like all supernatural acts, they merit (at least *de congruo*) actual grace which is the great medicine of the spirit. Besides, man does not return quite so readily to acts which deserve and bring punishment.

Two observations should be made here. The merely objective penal character of a work does not make it satisfactory. The penalty is only the material element in satisfaction; to be satisfactory, the formal element of voluntariness must be joined to the penalty. The penal work must always be in conjunction with the will of the penitent, so that he voluntarily assumes the penalty with the intention of making satisfaction. It would seem that the implicit intention of directing penal works to the performance of satisfaction would suffice. It is presumed that everyone, endowed with the other required conditions, desires by a general intention to derive all the benefits possible from his spiritual works.

On the other hand, the satisfactory value of such penal works is not at all diminished where, by reason of constancy in virtue, they become easier for the individual. Such diminution of difficulty does not derive from the work itself, which remains equally penal and laborious objectively, but rather flows from the promptness of the individual will through the action of supernatural charity. In fact, such a diminution of the subjective penal character of the works rather increases their efficacy as satisfaction, because it makes those works more pleasing to God. In this sense the penitential practices of the Saints, remaining equally penal objectively, were performed with a growing facility. The works were actually no less difficult or penal, but the increase of charity in the Saints made such works easier for them.

ARTICLE IV. VICARIOUS HUMAN SATISFACTION

As long as the conditions of satisfaction are fulfilled, one person may satisfy for another by reason of the Communion of Saints, the great supernatural organization, the members of which

⁵⁹ De San, *op. cit.*, p. 674, n. 900; cf. Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 359, n. 470.

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are commanded to bear one another's burdens.⁶⁰ The field in which that possibility exists is, however, limited:

a) One person may make satisfaction for another in so far as satisfaction is directed to the remission of the debt of temporal punishment due to remitted sins.

b) Satisfaction as a preservative medicine against future sins is *per se* availing only to the one who performs it. The medicine taken by one patient does not cure the illness of another patient.

c) Sacramental satisfaction enjoined upon one penitent cannot be performed, in so far as it is strictly sacramental, by another person. It must be performed by the penitent who receives the sacrament of Penance, and who is alone responsible for the performance of an integral part of that sacrament.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Cf. Hugon, *op. cit.*, III, "De Poenitentia," q. 4, a. 3, pp. 609-610; Merkelbach, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 497-498, nn. 546-547. The latter notes that the principles listed here apply also to satisfaction for souls in purgatory.

⁶¹ Cf. IV Lateran Council, cap. 21 (DB 437); Council of Trent, Sess. VI, cap. 14 (DB 807); Sess. XIV, cap. 8 (DB 904-905); *Codex I. C.*, canon 387.

CHAPTER III

SACRAMENTAL SATISFACTION

ARTICLE I. NOTION

To the notion of satisfaction in general or extra-sacramental satisfaction, sacramental satisfaction adds the notion of an element of the sacrament of Penance, enjoined by the confessor.

It may be defined as the penance (*opus bonum et poenale*) imposed by the confessor in the sacrament of Penance, to compensate for the injustice inflicted upon God through sin and to secure the remission of the temporal punishment due to sin.¹

The word penance (*opus bonum et poenale*) is included in the definition because it is only by performing some good work, which is pleasing to God and burdensome and painful to himself, that man can compensate for and punish the offense and injustice inflicted on God through sin, "for sacramental satisfaction of its very nature is a chastisement."²

Imposition by the confessor as an element of the sacrament of Penance is the link by means of which satisfaction is made sacramental. Other works of penance, assumed by one's own will or freely accepted from God, possess satisfactory value. They are not, however, sacramental satisfactions and hence do not attain the proper effect of sacramental satisfaction.

Sacramental satisfaction can be considered as existing either in intention (*in voto*) or in execution (*in re*).

Satisfaction *in voto* is the will to accept and fulfill the penance imposed by the confessor. The intention of performing the satisfaction (supposing that it binds *sub gravi*) is essential to the reception of the sacrament; otherwise the penitent will be lacking the necessary purpose of amendment in that he lacks the resolution

¹ Cf. Noldin-Schmitt, *op. cit.*, III, p. 304, n. 299; Merkelbach, *op. cit.*, III, p. 487, n. 534; Prümmer, *op. cit.*, III, p. 280, n. 391; Cappello, *op. cit.*, II, p. 240, n. 298; H. Davis, *Moral and Pastoral Theology*, III (3rd ed.; London: Sheed and Ward, 1941), p. 261.

² Noldin-Schmitt, *op. cit.*, III, p. 304, n. 299.

to fulfill a grave obligation. Hence such an intention must precede absolution and its absence would invalidate the sacrament.³ Satisfaction *in re* is the actual fulfillment of the penance assigned. It is an integral (as distinguished from essential) part of the sacrament,⁴ generally follows the absolution of the priest, and, if omitted, does not render the sacrament invalid, but only imperfect and incomplete. This is not to say that the omission of actual satisfaction is not sinful. For in a case where a grave penance is imposed by the confessor *sub gravi* (which intention of the confessor is to be presumed in grave matter), the penitent who wilfully omits all or a large part of the penance assigned is guilty of mortal sin. Even where one of those two conditions is lacking, such a penitent would be guilty of a venial sin.⁵

Sacramental satisfaction is both vindictive and medicinal. Its vindictive aspect, satisfaction aims to punish sin. Medicinal satisfaction intends to prevent relapses into sin. In sacramental to heal or cure the spiritual weakness caused by them. The proper and primary objective, however, is expiation for the punishment due to sins.

Sacramental satisfaction according to the more probable and more common theological view is an integral element of the proximate matter of Penance, and hence partakes of the efficacy of the sacrament instituted by Christ. Thus, it produces the

³ Cf. A. Vermeersch, *Theologiae Moralis Principia, Responsa, Consilia, ad confitentiam culpam mortalem*, sub mortali debet animo paratus esse acceptare et exsequi poenitentiam quae ei rationabiliter imponitur, ut aliquis expiatio peccati et poenae temporalis Dei debitae post remissionem culpam. The reason for changing the statement from a case of mortal sin to one in which the satisfaction will bind *sub gravi* is to make the doctrine more clear. The confessor can assign a grave penance merely *sub levi*. Cf. Vermeersch, *op. cit.*, III, p. 448, n. 500, 4; Merkelbach, *op. cit.*, III, p. 302; p. 311, n. 308, 2.

⁴ Cf. Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, cap. 3 and canon 4 (DB 896, 914); Council of Florence, *Decretum pro Armenis* (DB 699); *Errores Martini Luther*, n. 5 (DB 745).

⁵ For example, cf. Prümmer, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 285-286, n. 400; Vermeersch, *op. cit.*, III, p. 499, n. 554.

remission of the temporal punishment due to already remitted sins *ex opere operato*. Our Lord instituted the sacrament of Penance, of which satisfaction is an integral part, for the complete and total remission of sin, the remission of the guilt and of all punishment due to the repentant sinner.

Consequently, it becomes evident that works of sacramental satisfaction have a twofold satisfactory effect: one *ex opere operato*, which accrues to them because they are an element of a sacrament, the other *ex opere operantis*, which they produce in common with all other good works of a man in the state of grace.

ARTICLE II. OBLIGATION OF THE CONFESSOR

There is no question here of the will to make satisfaction on the part of the penitent. It is necessarily supposed before any actual satisfaction may be availing toward the intended end. We are concerned with satisfaction *in re*, the integral part of the sacrament of Penance.

The obligation of the priest to impose a sacramental penance is prescribed by the Council of Trent:

The priests of the Lord must therefore, so far as reason and prudence suggest, impose salutary and suitable satisfactions, in keeping with the nature of the crimes and the ability of the penitents; otherwise, if they should connive at sins and deal too leniently with penitents, imposing certain very light works for very grave offenses, they might become partakers in the sins of others.

The Council likewise condemns all those who deny that this power was included in the transmission to the Church of the powers of binding and loosing.⁶

1. *The priest has the power to enjoin satisfaction.* That is clear from the words in which Our Lord granted to the Apostolic College the general power of binding and loosing and the express power to remit and retain sins.⁷ In neither case does Christ place any limit upon the power granted to the Apostles and their successors.

⁶ Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, cap. 8, canon 15 (DB 905, 925); *Codex I. C.*, canon 887.

⁷ Matt. 18:18; John 20:23.

The power of binding and loosing is limited only by the purpose of the Church to which the power was entrusted—the salvation of souls. The salutary purgation of sins and of the punishment due to them through the assignment of satisfaction certainly contributes to the attainment of that purpose.

Neither did Christ place any limit to the object of the power to forgive or retain sins. Hence that power extends to the full and perfect remission of sins. It would not be totally efficacious in remitting the temporal punishment due to sins, however, unless one of its acts was the imposition of sacramental satisfaction, the means normally required for the remission of that punishment.

The Council of Trent teaches that this has been the traditional understanding of the power of the keys. The Fathers both believe and teach that the "keys of the priests were granted not only to loose, but also to bind."⁸

2. *The priest is obliged to use the power to enjoin satisfaction.* Such is the express teaching of the Council of Trent and the Code of Canon Law cited above. The obligation of the confessor to enjoin penance is likewise clear from:

a) The very nature of the sacrament of Penance:
 (1) Christ so instituted the sacrament that the remission of sins should be achieved in a judicial manner and according to that certain process by which remission is given by God. Hence when the confessor as judge remits the guilt and eternal punishment of sin, he must judicially announce to the sinner that there remains a penalty to be paid. This is precisely to impose satisfaction.⁹

(2) Christ instituted the sacrament to remove completely post-baptismal sin. The sacrament does not signify and hence does not effect the remission of temporal punishment except where penance is assigned toward that remission. The Council of Trent clearly indicates this truth in anathematizing all those who presume to deny that "for the full and perfect remission of sins the three acts of the penitent, the quasi matter of the sacrament of Penance, are required, that is contrition, confession, and satisfaction."¹⁰

⁸ Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, cap. 8 (DB 905); canon 15 (DB 925).
⁹ Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 371, n. 488, 2.

¹⁰ Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, canon 4 (DB 914); cf. cap. 3 (DB 896).

(3) In the confessional, the priest is both judge and doctor. Hence he must both punish and cure sins. Satisfaction, which provides both punishment and medicine, is the means by which the confessor fulfills his twofold duty. Hence he must assign it.

b) The reasons of congruity suggested by the Council of Trent. Satisfaction should be assigned because post-baptismal justification should be more arduous than that of Baptism; because through the imposition of satisfaction divine mercy more efficaciously recalls man from sin, either by showing the gravity of sin or by repairing the remains of sin and inculcating good habits; because by satisfaction the sinner is conformed to Christ.¹¹

3. *The penitent is subject to that power of the priest.* He deserves punishment because of the general rule concerning the ordinary persistence of a debt of temporal punishment even after the remission of the guilt and eternal punishment. He is subject to the priest precisely as the priest has the power of imposing penance. The power of the priest is the power of a judge. A penitent seeking pardon through the tribunal of penance is subject to the priest in so far as he is a judge. Moreover, the power of binding and loosing, which also includes the power of enjoining penance in the internal forum, cannot be exercised in Penance except on the penitent.¹²

4. The constant and universal practice of the Church confirms these principles.¹³ The Church has ever signified the mode of satisfaction to be imposed upon penitents by confessors, both in public and in private penance. Extensive evidence for such direction may be found in all the sources of the history of penance. The Fathers indicate that the laborious remission of post-baptismal sins is accomplished through the priests. The Patristic doctrine is aptly summarized by St. Leo the Great:

For the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus gave this power to the leaders of the Church in order that they should both give to those making confession the action of penance, and also admit those same ones, cleansed by suitable satisfaction, to the com-

¹¹ Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, cap. 8 (DB 904).

¹² Palmieri, *op. cit.*, p. 436.

¹³ *Codex I. C.*, canon 887.

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minion of the sacraments through the door of recon-
ciliation.¹⁴

To the witness of the Fathers may be added the directions of penitential canons and the decrees of councils, and especially of the *Libri Poenitentiales*.¹⁵

5. The obligation to impose satisfaction is *per se* grave. Hence the confessor is bound *sub gravi* to impose penance for necessary matter. One school holds that he is also bound *sub gravi* to impose penance for free matter because of the irreverence toward the sacrament which would be involved in omitting the injunction.¹⁶ Others hold that the confessor is only bound *sub levi* to impose penance for venial sins and mortal sins directly forgiven previously.¹⁷ *Per accidens* the confessor is not bound to given satisfaction where (a) the penitent is not physically or morally capable of performance; (b) the confessor might know from divine revelation that the penitent had made full satisfaction; (c) the penitent confesses a sin after absolution which does not substantially change the state of the penitent.¹⁸

6. The confessor must assign "salutary and suitable satisfac-

¹⁴ *Epistola 108*, cap. 2: "Mediator enim Dei et hominum, homo Christus actionem poenitentiae Ecclesiae tradidit potestatem, ut et confitentibus communionem sacramentorum per januam reconciliationis purgatos, ad K 263"; St. Augustine, *De lapsis*, cap. 29 (CSEL 3, 1, 258-259);
¹⁵ Cf. St. Columbanus, *De Poenitentiarum Mensura Taxanda Liber* (PL 567-576); *De Remedis Peccatorum, Poenitentiale Animum* (PL 94, p. 282, n. 395. Prümmer notes that this controversy is of little practical utility, since all authors hold that satisfaction is always to be imposed upon every penitent capable of performing it.

¹⁶ Thus Merkelbach, *op. cit.*, III, p. 493, n. 541; Prümmer, *op. cit.*, III, p. 282, n. 395. Prümmer notes that this controversy is of little practical utility, since all authors hold that satisfaction is always to be imposed upon every penitent capable of performing it.

¹⁷ Thus J. De Lugo, *Disputationes Scholasticae et Morales*, ed. J. B. Noldin-Schmitt, *op. cit.*, III, p. 306, n. 302; Sabetti-Barrett, *Compendium Theologiae Morals* (ed. 27a; New York: Pustet, 1919), p. 723, n. 763; Cappello, *op. cit.*, II, p. 244, n. 304. Cappello notes this as the more probable opinion.

¹⁸ Merkelbach, *op. cit.*, III, p. 493, n. 540. Merkelbach adds that in practice it is better to impose some slight additional penance in this last case.

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tions, in keeping with the nature of the crimes and the ability of the penitents."¹⁹ Thus in assigning penance the confessor must consider the quantity and quality of the sins confessed, and the state and disposition of the penitent.²⁰ This obligation to enjoin a proportioned penance is also *per se* grave. Therefore, in general, the confessor is bound to impose grave penance for necessary matter, light penance for free matter.

7. Proportioned penance demands grave penance for mortal sins. It also demands that as the sins are multiplied or become more grave, the penance must also be *morally* heavier. Penance proportioned to the quality or kind of sin will be that which is contrary to the sin. Thus almsgiving would be the proper penance for the sin of greed.²¹ The confessor must consider the individual penitent in order that his injunction may not exceed the capacity of the penitent and thus act against the primary end of the sacrament. As the Ritual warns, he should be guided by the state, condition, sex, age, and disposition of the penitent.²²

8. This principle of proportioned satisfaction is supported by the tradition of the Church. The Fathers explicitly state that not only the gravity of the crimes, but also the contrition, the state of mind, and the circumstances of the penitent should be weighed by the priest in determining the assignment of penance.²³ The Penitential Books offer the same lesson in various penances for various classes of penitents and even explicitly state this principle.²⁴ Implicitly or explicitly the principle was based upon the word and example of St. Paul in commending the offender at

¹⁹ Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, cap. 8 (DB 905).

²⁰ *Codex I. C.*, canon 887.

²¹ *Rituale Romanum*, Titulus III, cap. I, n. 20.

²² *Ibid.*, n. 19.

²³ Cf. St. Augustine, *Enchiridion*, cap. 65 (PL 40, 262-263); *De Diversis Quaestionibus LXXXIII*, 26 (PL 40, 17-18); *De Correctione et Gratia*, cap. 15, 46 (PL 44, 944); *Epistolarum XCV*, 3 (CSEL 34, 2, 508-509); *De Fide et Operibus*, cap. 3, 4 (CSEL 41, 39-40); St. Leo the Great, *Epistola 159*, cap. 6 (PL 54, 1138); St. John Chrysostom, *De Sacerdotio*, II, 4 (PG 48, 635).

²⁴ Cf. St. Columbanus, *op. cit.*, n. xii (PL 80, 225 D-226 A); *Poenitentiale Animum* (PL 94, 567 D-569 D); *Poenitentiale Romanum* (PL 105, 695 D-696 C; 705 D-706 A; 707 B).

Corinth and ordering his forgiveness: "On the contrary, then, you should rather forgive and comfort him, lest perchance he be overwhelmed by too much sorrow."²⁵

9. The priest should impose penance ordinarily before giving absolution. He may assign penance after absolution and indeed must do so if he has previously omitted to assign it.

ARTICLE III. OBLIGATION OF PENITENTS

1. The penitent is obliged to accept and fulfill the proportioned sacramental penance assigned by the confessor.²⁶ The fact that to the sins of the penitent, necessarily supposes in the penitent the obligation to accept and fulfill that penance. "Rights and duties are correlative."²⁷ The obligation of the penitent to accept the penance does not bind in the case where the penance assigned is manifestly unreasonable, that is, where (viewing present-day practice) the penance does not correspond to the ability of the penitent. It should be noted that a difficult or a long penance is not at once to be judged as unreasonable.

2. Of its nature (*per se*) the obligation to fulfill the assigned penance is grave. Hence a penitent is obliged *sub gravi* to fulfill a grave penance enjoined by the confessor *sub gravi*. In a given case, two conditions must be fulfilled in order that the penitent *de facto* may be obliged *sub gravi* to fulfill the penance assigned: (a) the penance itself must be grave; (b) the confessor must intend to bind the penitent *sub gravi*. This is always presumed when a grave penance is given for mortal sins, not yet directly remitted, in which case alone a grave obligation can be imposed.²⁸

²⁵ II Cor. 2:7. Cf. Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 372, n. 490, for an interesting note concerning present-day practice as an outgrowth of this early principle.

²⁶ IV Lateran Council, cap. 21 (*DB* 437); Council of Trent, Sess. VI, cap. 14 (*DB* 807); Sess. XIV, cap. 8 (*DB* 904-905); *Codex I. C.*, canon 887.

²⁷ Cappello, *op. cit.*, II, p. 257, n. 326.

²⁸ Cf. Cappello, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 260-261, n. 329. Cappello notes that while some authors once thought that a grave penance could be imposed *sub gravi* for venial sins or mortal sins already remitted directly, the opinion followed above "*verior est et practice omnino iuta.*" Cappello also notes that a grave penance binding *sub gravi* for venial sins (and directly re-

This obligation ceases in the case of an invalid confession or where absolution is not given (unless the penance is to be fulfilled as a condition of future absolution).

3. The penitent must fulfill the assigned penance himself, and at the time and in the manner prescribed by the confessor. If no time has been determined, penance is ordinarily fulfilled after absolution and as soon as conveniently possible.²⁹

4. When sacramental satisfaction is fulfilled in the state of mortal sin:

a) The penitent fulfills the precept or obligation placed upon him by the confessor, because he fulfills the work assigned even though the purpose of the work is not attained.

b) The penitent certainly does not thereby commit another mortal sin. It is probable he does not commit any sin; more probably he is guilty of a venial sin.

c) It probably attains its satisfactory effect when the penitent regains the state of grace; even with the obstacle removed, however, it probably does not attain its meritorious effect.³⁰

mortal sins) "can only then be imposed when it is necessary to cure the spiritual weakness (*infirmiorem*) of the penitent, and therefore it is not so much a new imposition as it is the *declaration of the obligation* which the penitent himself has."

²⁹ Cf. Galtier, *op. cit.*, pp. 372-374, nn. 491-492.

³⁰ St. Alphonsus, *Theologia Moralis*, II (Turin: Marietti, 1879), lib. VI, t. iv, nn. 522-523.

Realists, in Paris. He soon made himself a rival of the latter and founded, in 1102, a school at Melun, one of the residences of the court. From Melun he moved his school to Corbeil and finally he returned to Paris, where his school was at Sainte-Geneviève.

Interest in theology took Peter to Laon to study under Anselm. Disappointed in his professor, he again became a rival and set up his own chair of teaching. This move brought on him resentment which forced his return to Paris. There he became, with the title of canon (even though not in Sacred Orders), the director of the School of Notre Dame. At the time he was only thirty-four years of age. For five years, 1113 to 1118, Abelard enjoyed a brilliant success in his teaching there.

His success at Notre Dame, as he himself admits, swelled his pride.¹ His affair with Eloise in 1118 marked the end of his brilliant teaching career, and from this point his life is marked with various clashes and difficulties.

After his first difficulty, Abelard embraced the monastic life at the Abbey of Saint-Denys. His teaching there and at Saint-Ayoul near Provins emphasized his errors on the Trinity. He was condemned at the Council of Soissons (1121) which met under the Papal Legate, Conon d'Urrach. Abelard was compelled to cast his own book, *De Unitate et Trinitate Divina*, into the fire and was ordered to live at the Monastery of Saint-Médard. The Legate, however, allowed him to return to Saint-Denys shortly afterward. There his stay was shortened when he denied the descent of the abbey from St. Denis the Areopagite.

Next Peter founded the school of the Paraclete in the desert near Nogent-sur-Seine. His teaching and the works he had written in solitude added to his errors on the Trinity. Apparently these doctrinal matters were quickly noted by St. Bernard and St. Norbert. But in 1125 Peter was elected abbot of Saint-Gildas de Rhuys and thus escaped from the scene before action could be taken against him. In 1129 he returned to the School of the Paraclete.

In 1136 Abelard was back at the mount of Sainte-Geneviève teaching. In 1139, the Cistercian Abbot, William of Saint-

¹ *Epistola I seu Historia Calamitatum*, cap. 5 (PL 178, 126).

CHAPTER IV

THE DOCTRINE OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY

The theologians of the twelfth century occupied themselves at length with questions pertaining to the sacrament of Penance. Their main concern, however, was contrition. They recognized that it was the most essential part of the sacrament and toward it they directed the greater part of their investigations.¹

Nevertheless they gave due attention to the matter of satisfaction. The authors were acquainted with the severe penances of the early Church. The writings of the Fathers had recorded those penances accurately. In the twelfth century writings all the essentials of the doctrine appear. If there is one point more clearly stressed than any other, it is the necessity of satisfaction. The predominant thought concerning satisfaction is that whatever penance is not performed here on earth will be exacted in the excruciating torments of purgatory.²

The terminology is not yet uniform, but the basis for the elaboration of the great Scholastics is found here.

PETER ABELARD (1079-1142)

Peter Abelard was born in 1079 in the village of Pallet, about ten miles east of Nantes in Brittany. His parents, and especially his father, Bérenger, gave him a taste for letters. Moreover, at an early age he began to travel in search of schools of dialectics.

Abelard received his training in philosophy from the schools of the current opposing schools. First he studied under Roscelin who had returned to his Nominalist errors after his condemnation at the Council of Soissons (1092-3). About 1100 Abelard followed the lectures of William of Champeaux, leader of the

¹ E. Amaun, "Pénitence—Repentir," *DTC* XII, 1 (1933), 736.

² E. Amaun, "La Pénitence privée; son organisation; premières spéculations a son sujet," *DTC*, XII, 1 (1933), 933-934.

Thierry, accused Peter of error and reported him to St. Bernard and to Geoffroy, Bishop of Chartres.

In 1140-41, the Council of Sens condemned a series of propositions from Peter's writings. Peter, denied the opportunity to defend himself by open debate, decided to go to Rome. On the way he learned at Lyons that Innocent II had confirmed the sentence of the Council and had condemned him to monastical enclosure.

At Cluny he was met and received by Peter Venerable, who kept him at his abbey, comforted him and eventually brought about his reconciliation with St. Bernard. He likewise procured permission from Rome for Abelard's continued residence with him. Finally, he inspired Abelard to retract his errors. Death came to Abelard in his sixty-third year on April 12, 1142.

NATURE OF SATISFACTION

Abelard treats Penance in conjunction with the other sacraments, but does not explicitly call it a sacrament.⁴ Stressing the part of the penitent in Penance, Abelard states that "in the reconciliation of the sinner to God there are three things, namely, penance, confession, satisfaction."⁵

He makes no attempt to define satisfaction strictly, but he does offer an adequate description. Peter identifies satisfaction with the fruits of penance mentioned in the Gospels.

We call satisfaction, however, these punishments of the present life, by which we satisfy for sins, by fasting, or praying, by watching, or by mortifying the flesh in any way, or by expending on the needy what we have taken

⁴ It should be noted that Abelard's most important work is his *Introdutio ad Theologiam*. He composed it as a true summary of theology divided into three general sections dealing respectively with Faith, Sacraments, and Charity, and written sometime after 1133; only the first part has been preserved. Fortunately, however, the *Epitome Theologiae Christianae* presents a summary of the original *Introdutio*. It is regarded as a product of the school of Abelard and constitutes a manual of Abelardian theology. *Ipsium*.

⁵ *Ethica seu Liber Dicitus Scito Te Ipsum*, cap. 17 (PL 178, 661 A); cf. *Epitome Theologiae Christianae*, cap. 35 (PL 178, 1756 B).

away from ourselves; which we have known to be called by another name in the Gospel fruits of penance. . . .⁶

SATISFACTORY WORKS

Some of the works by which satisfaction may be performed are prayer, fasting, watching, mortification of the flesh, and almsgiving.⁷ It is also interesting to note that Peter sees in the humiliation of confession (at least where that confession is made to other of the faithful) "a great part of satisfaction."⁸

EFFECT OF SATISFACTION

The chief effect of satisfaction is the remission of the temporal punishment due to sin and remaining even after the eternal punishment has been forgiven. The temporal punishment remitted by

⁶ *Ibid.*, cap. 25: "Has autem poenas vitae praesentis, quibus de peccatis satisfacimus, jejumando, vel orando, vigilando, vel quibuscumque modis carmen macerando, vel quae nobis subtrahimus, egenis impendendo, satisfactionem vocamus; quae alio nomine in Evangelio fructus poenitentiae novimus appellari . . ." (PL 178, 672 B).

⁷ *Ibid.*, cap. 24 (PL 178, 668 C). Confession to lay persons was a practice of the Middle Ages. It began in principle in the eleventh century. Vacandard suggests that it was implied by Lanfranc and that a case was related by Thietmar, Bishop of Mersebourg, in his *Chronique*, composed in 1015. The spread of this custom, however, was due to the approbation of Pseudo-Augustine (ca. 1100) in the *Liber de vera et falsa poenitentia*, c. 10 (PL 40, 1122). The practice showed: (1) regard for the necessity and the value of confession; (2) regard for the part played in the sacrament by the acts of the penitent. Its definitive demise is due in large measure to the influence of Duns Scotus. But there was never any question of a lay person having the power of the keys or the power to grant absolution for sins. Cf. Abelard, *Ethica*, cap. 24 (PL 178, 668 D); *Epitome*, cap. 36 (PL 178, 1756 D); Peter Lombard, *Liber IV Sent.*, Dist. XVII, cap. 4, n. 170, p. 853; Alexander of Hales, *Summa Theologiae*, P. IV, q. 16, m. 1, a. 2 (p. 505, 2); St. Albert the Great, *In IV^{um} Sent.*, Dist. XVII, a. 39, solutio, ad lum (p. 719); a. 58-59 (pp. 754-755); St. Bonaventure, *In IV^{um} Librum*, Dist. XVI, p. III, dub. 1; Dist. XVII, p. III, a. 1, q. 1; St. Thomas, *In Lib. IV Sent.*, Dist. XVII, q. 3, a. 3, sol. 2, ad lum; Duns Scotus, *In IV^{um} Lib. Sent.*, Dist. XIV, q. 4, n. 5 (p. 155). For further treatment, cf. E. Vacandard, "Confession du Ier Au XIIIe Siècle," *DTC*, III, 1 (1908), 877-878; Gallier, *De Poenitentia*, p. 396, n. 516.

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satisfaction may be viewed principally as the punishment otherwise due in purgatory, although such punishment is sometimes sent by God in the present life.⁹
There is also a medicinal effect achieved by the satisfaction which cures the vice.¹⁰

NECESSITY OF SATISFACTION

The need for the performance of satisfaction on the part of man flows from the debt of temporal punishment remaining after the forgiveness of sin and of the eternal punishment due to it. The procedure of Abelard's argument is very interesting, especially because it is fundamentally the form used in the most advanced of the Scholastics.

A sinner cannot achieve forgiveness through penance by weeping over his sins solely out of fear of punishment or judgment. Rather the love of God and hatred of sin must be the motivating forces. Besides, one attempting to excite true penance in himself does so in vain as long as he continues to hold the property of another unjustly. Restitution must precede fruitful penance and acceptable sacrifices.¹¹

It follows that fruitful penance for sin is had when sorrow and contrition of soul proceed from the love of God rather than from fear of punishment.¹² By this penance the forgiveness of sin is achieved, a forgiveness of both guilt and eternal punishment.

With this groaning and contrition of heart, however, which we term true penance, sin does not remain, whether this is contempt of God or consent to evil, because the love of God inspiring this groaning does not suffer guilt. In this groaning we are immediately reconciled to God, and we gain pardon of the preceding sin, according to the prophet: In whatever hour the sinner shall have groaned, he will be saved; that is, he will be made worthy of the salvation of his soul. He does not say: in what year, or in what month, or in what week, or on

⁹ *Ibid.*, cap. 19 (PL 178, 665 A); cap. 25 (PL 178, 672 A).
¹⁰ *Ibid.*, cap. 24 (PL 178, 669 B).

¹¹ *Ethica*, cap. 18 (PL 178, 661 B-D).

¹² *Ibid.*, cap. 19 (PL 178, 664 D).

which day, but in what hour: in order that he may show him worthy of pardon without delay and that eternal punishment is not due him, in which the condemnation of sin consists.¹³

That this is true appears also from the fact that a sinner dying with this true penance will not incur the pains of hell, even though he be prevented from going to confession and performing satisfaction.¹⁴

Yet God does not forgive penitents all the punishment due to their sins, but only the eternal punishment. That is why many penitents, kept from performing satisfaction in this life, are punished in the fires of purgatory even though they are not condemned to hell.¹⁵

Hence satisfaction is to be performed with great care and every effort in order that there will be no temporal punishment to be expiated in the future.¹⁶ Indeed when the Gospel warns of the need of bringing forth fruits befitting repentance, it intends to say:

... be reconciled to God here in such a manner by correcting what you have committed with fitting satisfaction, so that afterwards He may in no wise find what He Himself may punish; and anticipate graver punishments with milder ones. For as St. Augustine asserts: *The punishments of the future life, although they be purgatorial, are more grave than all those of the present life.*¹⁷

¹³ *Ibid.*: "Cum hoc autem gemitu et contritione cordis, quam veram poenitentiam dicimus, peccatum non permanet, hoc est contemptus Dei, sive consensus in malum, quia charitas Dei hunc gemitum inspirans, non patitur culpam. In hoc statim gemitu Deo reconciliamur, et praecedentis peccati veniam assequimur, juxta illud prophetae: *Quacunque hora peccator inveniam, saluus erit*; hoc est, salute animae suae dignus efficitur. Non ait: quo anno, vel quo mense, sive qua hebdomada, vel quo die, sed *qua hora*: ut sine dilatione venia dignum ostendat; nec ei poenam aeternam deberi, in qua consistit condemnatio peccati."

¹⁴ *Ibid.* (PL 178, 665 A).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*; cf. *Epitome*, cap. 37 (PL 178, 1757 D).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, cap. 25 (PL 178, 672 C); cf. *Epitome*, cap. 37 (PL 178, 1758 A).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*: "... digna satisfactione quod deliquistis, emendando ita hic reconciliamini Deo, ut deinceps quod ipse puniat nequaquam inveniat; et

Abelard adds that God sometimes may send purgatorial punishments in this life as well as in the next, if man himself be negligent in performing the due measure of satisfaction.¹⁸ One application of this teaching may come in the day of universal judgment. The length of that day is uncertain because many of the faithful, either by reason of neglect or impossibility, must there be punished to compensate for the satisfaction they omitted.¹⁹

POSSIBILITY OF SATISFACTION

Although he is so thoroughly intent upon the necessity of satisfaction, Abelard does not deem its possibility worthy of as much attention. Scripture commands satisfaction in the words of St. John the Baptist. Hence it must be possible. Explicitly, St. Paul states the principle that if we punish ourselves, we will not be further punished.

If, he says, we judged ourselves, we should not thus be judged (I Cor. 11:31); which is to say: If we ourselves be punished or amended our sins, they would in no wise be punished more gravely by Him. Truly great is the mercy of God, since He forgives us by our own judgment, in order that He may not punish us Himself with a more grave [judgment].²⁰

CONDITIONS

This satisfaction is not the mere suffering of a punishment. The will must have a part in it. Otherwise, why so many efforts to show its necessity? If satisfaction comes to a man and is valid whether he desires it or not, why urge him to make it? It is true that Abelard does not make a definite point of the

graviore poenas mitioribus praevenite. Ut enim beatus asserit Augustinus: Poenae vitae futurae, etsi purgatoriae sint, graviore sunt istis omnibus

¹⁸ *Ibid.* (PL 178, 672 B). Cf. *Epitome*, cap. 37 (PL 178, 1758 A).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, cap. 19 (PL 178, 665 B).

²⁰ *Ibid.*, cap. 25: "Si nos, inquit, *dijudicaverimus, non utique dijudicamur*

(I Cor. 11:31); quod est dicere: Si nos ipsi nostra puniremus, vel corrupto misericordia Dei, cum nos nostro iudicio dimittit, ne ipse puniat graviore" (PL 178, 672 A).

voluntariety of satisfaction, but he does make satisfaction an obligation in the fulfillment of which man himself can be faithful or negligent.²¹

Satisfaction is to be performed during this life only, in contradistinction to purgation by God which may take place in this life or in the next.²²

The state of grace also seems to be a condition of true satisfaction. In one place, Abelard rules out the possibility of a sinner performing fruitful penance for one mortal sin, while at the same time he retains another crime. True penance, inspired by love of God, does not permit the retention of a single mortal sin.²³

For if the love of God, as it must, moves me and leads my soul to this, that I may grieve over this consent on account of this reason alone because in it I have offended God, I do not see how the same love for the same reason would not force me to repent of that other contempt; that is, place my mind in that resolve, in order that whatever excess of mine should occur to memory, I may grieve over it in like manner, and be prepared to make satisfaction.²⁴

Abelard finds additional foundation in the fact that whoever perseveres in the love of God will be saved. Yet that salvation can in no wise be gained where even one mortal sin is retained.²⁵ Therefore the love of God rules out the retention of even one mortal sin.

In another place Abelard treats of those whose satisfaction is insufficient by reason of the ignorance or negligence of the confessor. He states that such penitents will not be damned by the error of the confessor because the guilt and eternal punishment

²¹ *Ethica*, cap. 25 (PL 178, 672 A).

²² *Ibid.*, cap. 19 (PL 178, 665 A); cap. 25 (PL 178, 672 A).

²³ *Ibid.*, cap. 20 (PL 178, 665 B).

²⁴ *Ibid.*: "Si enim amor Dei, sicut oportet, ad hoc me inducit, atque animum trahit, ut de hoc consensu doleam propter hoc tantum quia in eo Deum offendi, non video qualiter idem amor de illo contemptu eadem de causa poenitere non cogat; hoc est, in eo proposito mentem meam statuat, ut quis excessus meus memoriae occurrerit, de ipso similiter doleam, et ad satisfaciendum paratus sim" (PL 178, 665 C).

²⁵ *Ibid.* (PL 178, 665 D).

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of the penitent's sins have been forgiven before he came to confession or undertook to make satisfaction.

For the error of the prelates does not condemn the subjects, nor does the fault of the former blame the latter; which they might die, whom, as we have said, penance had already previously reconciled to God, that is, before they came to confession or undertook the assignment of satisfaction.²⁶

In the first instance, Abelard demands for fruitful penance, repentance for all mortal crimes. Since he apparently holds to the necessity of perfect contrition, such repentance brings about the justification of the sinner, the presence of grace. In the second instance, he views this justification as a prelude to confession and satisfaction. But even if this interpretation seems to press the meaning too closely, some force may be gathered from the fact that Abelard sees in the love of God, which promotes true penance, the source of the will to make satisfaction.

In a general way also, Abelard insinuates the need of the help of grace for satisfaction. For God inspires repentance and thus aids man to escape eternal damnation.²⁷

SACRAMENTAL SATISFACTION

Satisfaction is to be assigned by the priest-confessor.

Finally, the priests, to whom the souls of those confessing have been intrusted, have the power to enjoin the satisfactions of penance on them, in order that those, who have wrongly and proudly used their own judgment in despising God may be punished by the judgment of a power belonging to another; and they do that the more securely, the more faithfully in obeying their prelates they follow not their own, but their [prelates'] will.²⁸

²⁶ *Ibid.*, cap. 25: "Non enim error praelatorum subjectos damnat, nec illorum vitium istos accusat; nec iam in subjectis culpa remanet qua moriantur, quos iam antea poenitentia Deo, ut diximus, reconciliaverat, prius scilicet quam ad confessionem venirent vel satisfactionis institutionem susciperent" (PL 178, 671 D); cap. 24 (PL 178, 668 D).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, cap. 20 (PL 178, 666 B).

²⁸ *Ethica*, cap. 24: "Denique sacerdotes quibus animae confidentium sunt

The priest not only has power to enjoin satisfaction, but he also has an obligation. Indeed if he should fail to assign it or should assign it poorly, when the penitent is willing and prepared to obey, the omission will be charged to the priest rather than to the penitent.²⁹

At times Abelard seems to indicate that there are fixed penances for certain sins. For he teaches that satisfaction should be undertaken according to the assignments of the Fathers or according to the assignments fixed by the canons.³⁰

Yet he teaches also that satisfaction must be assigned according to the quantity and kind of the sin. It is true this could be done with the penitential canons, but even if he intends to suppose fixed penances, he points out that priests should know how to moderate them in their application.³¹

Abelard recognizes that there are grave sins which are to be corrected with grave punishment of satisfaction, and lesser or venial sins for which daily prayer may sufficiently satisfy.³² He teaches that, if satisfaction is not enjoined in the measure in which it should be assigned, God Who punishes all sins in due proportion will see that equity of satisfaction is meted out according to the quantity of the sin.³³

This satisfaction will in turn vary according to the kind of the sin. For the penitent who seeks the medicine for his wound must reveal that wound to the doctor "in order that a suitable cure may be applied." The priest, by whom satisfaction is to be enjoined, holds the place of the physician.³⁴

commissae, satisfactiones poenitentiae illis habent injungere; ut qui male arbitrio suo et superbe usi sunt Deum contemnendo, alienae potestatis arbitrio corrigantur; et tanto securius id agant; quanto melius praelatis suis obediendo non tam suam, quam illorum voluntatem sequuntur" (PL 178, 779 D); *ibid.*, cap. 25 (PL 178, 670 B-C); cf. *Epitome*, cap. 36 (PL 178, 1756 D).

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*, cap. 25 (PL 178, 672 C).

³¹ *Ibid.* (PL 178, 670 D).

³² *Ibid.*, cap. 15 (PL 178, 658 D); cap. 16 (PL 178, 659 C).

³³ *Ibid.*, cap. 25 (PL 178, 672 A).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, cap. 24 (PL 178, 669 B).

HUGH OF SAINT-VICTOR (1097-1141)

Hugh of Saint-Victor was born about 1097. Authorities are divided in their opinions concerning the place of Hugh's birth.³⁵ According to one opinion, Hugh was born at the manor of Hartingham in Saxony. His father was Conrad, Count of Blankenburg. His uncle Reinhard, who had studied in Paris under William of Champeaux, was Bishop of Halberstadt. Hugh was educated in the monastery of Saint Pancras at Hamerleve, near Halberstadt. There he later took the habit of the Canons Regular of Saint Augustine.

According to another opinion, Hugh was born in Flanders or Lorraine of humble extraction. He left home at an early age and went to Germany where he joined the monastery at Hamerleve.

At any rate Hugh arrived at the monastery of Saint-Victor in Paris about 1118. Its founder, William of Champeaux, elected Bishop of Châlons in 1112, had been succeeded at Saint-Victor by Gilduin. It was under Gilduin's rule and guidance that Hugh spent the rest of his life, studying, teaching, and writing.

Thomas, the Prior and director of studies, who had assisted the bishop from time to time, was assassinated on August 20, 1133, for defending the rights of the bishop. Hugh succeeded him as director of studies and probably as Prior also.

His death came while he was in the prime of life on February 11, 1141.

Hugh's genius and unremitting toil gave him an extensive and profound knowledge in letters, philosophy, and theology. He applied that knowledge to several written works.

In the various editions of Hugh's works, many books or opuscula have been ascribed to him which could not have been the product of his labor. In the field of theology, the *Summa Sententiarum* was traditionally ascribed to Hugh of Saint-Victor. At one time the opinion of scholars concluded that Hugh actually was the author; later scholarship either opposes the authenticity or at least views as very doubtful its ascription to Hugh.³⁶

³⁵ F. Vernet, "Hughes de Saint-Victor," *DTC*, VII, 1 (1922), 240-242.
³⁶ *Ibid.*, 253-256.

Written before 1133, it is a true compendium of theology in two books. Because of the doubtful authenticity of the *Summa Sententiarum* and because *De Sacramentis* contains all the essentials of Hugh's teaching, the latter is used as the exclusive source for Hugh's treatment of satisfaction.

NATURE OF SATISFACTION

Hugh of Saint-Victor makes exterior penance and satisfaction synonymous. Penance is twofold, interior and exterior. Interior penance is found in contrition of the heart, and through it the guilt of the disordered will is amended. Exterior penance is found in the affliction of the flesh, and through it the guilt of inferior action is punished.³⁷

Satisfaction, or exterior penance, is the fruit of contrition, or interior penance. For penance is one thing and the fruits of penance are another.

Penance is sorrow for past commission, when you grieve that you have done what is evil. Therefore when you reject and condemn your evil [actions], you have penance; when, however, by subsequent satisfaction, you both punish and correct your evil [actions], you have the fruits of penance. If that which you have done displeases you, you do penance. If you pursue and punish what you have done, you perform the fruits of penance. Penance is the rejection of what has been done; the fruits of penance are the correction of the crime.³⁸

SATISFACTORY WORKS

There is no enumeration of the works by which exterior penance or satisfaction may be made. There are indications that both prayer and almsgiving afford means of satisfaction, and it would seem logical to conclude that "affliction of the flesh" includes fasting. When Hugh writes about the souls of the departed, he points to Holy Mass, prayer, and almsgiving as means

³⁷ *De Sacramentis Christianae Fidei*, Lib. II, p. xiv, c. 2 (PL 176, 554-555).

³⁸ *Ibid.* (PL 176, 555 A).

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by which the living can help them.³⁹ The same works should certainly be profitable as satisfaction for the living themselves. Hugh explicitly refers to almsgiving as a work of satisfaction.⁴⁰

EFFECT OF SATISFACTION

The effect of satisfaction is the complete correction of sin, after which the soul is prepared to enter heaven and thus to avoid the terrible pains of purgatory.⁴¹

NECESSITY OF SATISFACTION

When man offends God by mortal sin, he contracts a twofold bond; he is bound by a hardening or blindness of the mind (*obduratio mentis*) in the present and by the debt of future damnation. The blindness of the mind constitutes the interior darkness in which the sinner is held for the present, and which must be remitted in this life; otherwise the sinner will be cast into exterior darkness in the next life.⁴²

Hugh of St. Victor holds that the blindness of the mind and the debt of future damnation can be and sometimes are remitted, but he also teaches that such remission does not mean that the debt of satisfaction for sin is also removed.⁴³ He does not state explicitly that this debt of satisfaction is a debt of temporal punishment. He does teach that this debt is perfectly compatible with salvation, salvation indeed through purgatorial fire. Whatever man fails to purge from his soul in this life through satisfaction will be exacted in purgatory in the next life.⁴⁴ The debt of satisfaction must therefore constitute a debt of temporal punishment.

Satisfaction is to be made to God and constitutes one of the remedies which God has instituted for the remission of sin.⁴⁵ Ordinarily man is obliged to work out this debt of satisfaction

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. xvi, c. 7 (PL 176, 594-595); cf. c. 6 (PL 176, 593-594).
⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. xiv, c. 6 (PL 176, 562 C).
⁴¹ *Ibid.*, c. 3 (PL 176, 556 B-C).
⁴² *De Sacramentis*, Lib. II, p. xiv, c. 8 (PL 176, 565 B-C).
⁴³ *Ibid.* (PL 176, 567 B-C).
⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, c. 3 (PL 176, 556 B-C).
⁴⁵ *Ibid.* (PL 176, 555 D); cf. c. 8 (PL 176, 567 B-C).

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in this life, and any failure to do so proceeding from contempt would be punished by God.⁴⁶ Yet the impossibility of performing satisfaction or the fact that satisfaction was not complete in this life would not condemn the penitent for eternity.⁴⁷

POSSIBILITY OF SATISFACTION

Hugh of St. Victor does not offer an explicit treatment of how satisfaction is possible to man. He implies that man is entirely dependent on the mercy and the grace of God.⁴⁸ He affirms that man can make satisfaction. The sinner can do enough to satisfy, he cannot do too much.⁴⁹

CONDITIONS

Hugh indicates with considerable clarity many of the conditions now demanded for satisfaction. First of all satisfaction is to be made to God; hence the implication is that the work of satisfaction must be acceptable to God.⁵⁰

Man must satisfy during the present life which is the exclusive time of satisfaction. After this life there remains only purgation.⁵¹

Man must also enjoy the state of grace and the possession of charity. Hugh of St. Victor supposes charity, the foundation of salvation, as a prerequisite to satisfaction.⁵² The reason is that God sees the heart of man and demands that the heart be converted before man's works are acceptable.

On the part of the work offered as satisfaction, Hugh posits certain other conditions. That work must be voluntary, since the principal value of satisfaction comes from the will.⁵³ That work must be good.⁵⁴ It must also be penal, since punishment

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* (PL 176, 556 B-C).
⁴⁷ *Ibid.*; cf. c. 6 (PL 176, 560 D-564 A).
⁴⁸ *Op. cit.*, Lib. II, p. xiv, c. 8 (PL 176, 565 C).
⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, c. 2 (PL 176, 555 B-C).
⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, c. 3 (PL 176, 555 D).
⁵¹ *Ibid.* (PL 176, 556 B); cf. c. 4 (PL 176, 559 B-C).
⁵² *Ibid.* (PL 176, 556 C).
⁵³ *Ibid.*, c. 6 (PL 176, 560 D-564 A); cf. c. 3 (PL 176, 556 B).
⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, c. 5 (PL 176, 560 C).

of sin is of the essence of satisfaction.⁵⁵ It must proceed with the help of God's grace, because God Himself is responsible for all the good in man.⁵⁶

SACRAMENTAL SATISFACTION

Hugh of St. Victor does not make any explicit distinction between sacramental and extra-sacramental satisfaction. Indeed it would be more accurate to say that he treats of satisfaction only in so far as it is sacramental.

While he does not list contrition, confession, and satisfaction as parts of the sacrament, he does assume that those three things must be performed by the penitent. He admits that contrition will secure the remission of the blindness of mind which follows upon mortal sin. Yet contrition does not secure the *complete* remission of sin; the total or entire remedy instituted by God toward that remission must ordinarily be applied.⁵⁷ In Hugh's opinion, sacramental absolution removes the debt of future eternal punishment, satisfaction pays the debt of temporal punishment. Sacramental satisfaction is to be assigned by the priest in confession. Hugh stresses this point in indicating the difference between penance for venial sins and penance for mortal sins.

There is a certain common penance in the Church, which we perform each day toward one another; in which indulgence and remission for one another, we attain we reveal the guilt (*reatum*) of the more serious sin to the priest in individual confession; and when we have offered the performance of satisfaction according to his counsel, we obtain the indulgence of sin.⁵⁸

The priest must enjoin a proportioned satisfaction. "According to the quantity of the crime, the measure of the correction is to be judged." The command of the Inspired Word calls for the performance of fruits befitting repentance.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, c. 2 (PL 176, 555 A).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, c. 8 (PL 176, 569 C); cf. c. 4 (PL 176, 557 B); c. 6 (PL 176, 561 A).

⁵⁷ *Op. cit.*, Lib. II, p. xiv, c. 8 (PL 176, 567 B-C).

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, c. 1 (PL 176, 552 D-553 A); cf. c. 7 (PL 176, 564 C).

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, c. 2 (PL 176, 555 A-B); cf. c. 7 (PL 176, 564 B-C).

The penitent should accept and perform the satisfaction assigned by the priest. The penitent should not be so much concerned with the assignment of condign satisfaction by the priest, as with the performance of what the priest assigns. As long as the sinner has made the beginning of satisfaction, as long as he has the good will which is of principal interest to God, he will be saved from eternal damnation. The satisfaction omitted on earth will be completed by the purgation of purgatorial fires; yet since the punishment of purgatory is so extreme, the first intention should be to fulfill the debt of temporal punishment on earth.⁶⁰

Hugh of St. Victor mentions the occasion of conversion at the hour of death as one which prevents the performance of satisfaction.⁶¹ He insinuates, though he does not enumerate, other situations in which necessity might prevent its completion.⁶²

ROBERT PULLEN (ca. 1080-1146/1153)

Robert Pullen, English Cardinal, philosopher, and theologian of the twelfth century, was born in England about 1080.⁶³

It seems that he studied in Paris during the first decades of the twelfth century. Having returned to England, Robert was teaching Holy Scripture at Oxford in 1133, being one of the first of the celebrated teachers in the schools which were afterwards organized into Oxford University. He is thereby rated as one of the founders of Oxford.⁶⁴

In 1134 Robert appears as the archdeacon of Rochester. It is recorded that King Henry I offered him a bishopric which he refused. Some time after the death of Henry I (December 1, 1135), Robert went to Paris. A letter from Saint Bernard to the Bishop of Rochester in 1140 sought permission for Robert to remain and teach in Paris.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, c. 3 (PL 176, 555 D-556 C).

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, c. 5 (PL 176, 559 D-560 C).

⁶² *Ibid.*, c. 6 (PL 176, 560 D-564 A).

⁶³ Robert Pullen is also known by these surnames: Pullus, Pullan, Pullly, Pulley.

⁶⁴ Cf. E. Amann, "Robert Pulleyin," *DTC*, XIII, 2 (1937), 2753-2754.

⁶⁵ St. Bernard, *Epistola*, CCV (PL 182, 372).

Robert was still archdeacon of Rochester in 1143. Yet in 1145 he appeared in Rome as Cardinal-Priest of Saint Eusebius and Chancellor of the Roman Church. He countersigned the last Bull of Pope Lucius II; he countersigned the Bulls of Pope Eugene III until September 2, 1146. That is the last known date in his life.

Scholars have recognized in Robert Pullen a defender of orthodoxy as against the encroachments of the rationalistic tendency represented by Abelard.

Robert Pullen wrote a compendium of theology called *Sententiarum Theologicarum Libri Octo*. It was for some time the official textbook in theology for the schools of Western Europe. The *Sentences* of Peter Lombard superseded it later. Compared to Peter Lombard, Robert seems to have been more inclined to accept the strict interpretation of ecclesiastical tradition than to yield to the growing demands of dialectical method in theology and philosophy. The Lombard finally gained recognition, however, and it was his work which decided the fate of scholastic theology in the thirteenth century.

Robert's *Summa* was first published by the Benedictine, Dom Mathoud, in Paris, in 1655.

NATURE OF SATISFACTION

Robert Pullen is interesting as a witness to the theological development of his times. His testimony is valuable because he seems to offer the most complete treatment of the sacrament of Penance among the available works of the twelfth century. The editor of his work, Dom Mathoud, praises him in these words:

Let it suffice to have said one thing in favor of Pullen, that there are few among the writers of his century who expressed more clearly or more elegantly than he the nature of sacramental confession, its necessity, the circumstances to be explained down to the very atoms, likewise its various effects and functions, as the benevolent reader will perceive by a not unprofitable study.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ D. Hugonis Mathoud, *Observationes ad Libros Sententiarum Roberti Pulli*, ad librum sextum, cap. 61 (PL 186, 1099 D): "Unum in gratiam

Though he did not formulate a definition of satisfaction, Robert Pullen indicates that satisfaction is the means by which, through certain works, the temporal punishment due to already remitted sin is acquitted.

SATISFACTORY WORKS

The works by which satisfaction may be performed are classed under three general types: discipline, prayer, and almsgiving.⁶⁷

Indeed, prayer appeases God; discipline punishes the penitent; almsgiving labors for the advantage of our brothers. Deservedly therefore in these three ways to one diligently trying to rise from his sins the capability of his desire is at length given, and after the desire pardon; after pardon, however, that meanness by which it is anguish to man both to abandon old habits and to begin new, by the same three ways is diminished little by little, salvation is restored. Those same [ways] satisfy for sins; lastly, they moreover adorn this life with good morals, and indeed grant and increase future life.⁶⁸

EFFECT OF SATISFACTION

The effect of satisfaction is the remission of the temporal punishment due to already remitted sin. This temporal punishment remitted through satisfaction is primarily the fire of purgatory; it may sometimes be understood, however, as punishment otherwise to be visited upon the sinner in this world.

Pulli dixisse sufficiat, paucos esse inter sui saeculi scriptores, qui confessionis sacramentalis naturam, necessitatem, circumstantias ad ipsas usque atomos declarandas, varios item ejus effectus muniaque, aut eo clarius aut elegantius expresserit, ut non ingrato studio lector benevolus advertet."

⁶⁷ *Sententiarum Theologicarum Libri Octo*, Liber VII, cap. 1 (PL 186, 911 D).

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, cap. 2: "Quippe oratio Deum placat; disciplina poenitentem castigat; elemosyna fratrum commotis insudat. Merito igitur tribus his modis exire a peccatis diligenter conanti facultas voti tandem datur, et post votum venia, post veniam autem mendicitas illa qua anxium est homini et consueta relinquere, et nova inchoare, eisdem tribus paulatim imminuitur, salus reparatur. Eadem pro peccatis satisfaciunt; postremo autem vitam hanc moribus ornant, futuram vero largiuntur et amplificant" (PL 186, 913 D-914 A).

NECESSITY OF SATISFACTION

His statement of the necessity of this satisfaction is almost a summary of the whole doctrine. After compunction of heart, hope of pardon, and confession there is need for the fruits of penance. "For just as compunction is nothing without hope, and both of them nothing without confession; so the three together are inefficacious, if when time is at hand and you are able, you either do not receive from the priest the lamentations of penance, or having received them you little consider their accomplishment."⁶⁹ In this statement, Robert Pullen seems to make a clear-cut distinction between the will to accept satisfaction and the actual performance of satisfaction.

Satisfaction is necessary because "whoever offends is guilty of punishment; if he flees the punishment, the offense increases."⁷⁰ What this punishment is will appear more clearly from Robert's doctrine on the forgiveness of sin.

After a mortal sin, man is bound by the spiritual chains of the sin itself and of the punishment due to sin.⁷¹ This sin may be forgiven in such a way as to remove only the debt of eternal punishment, or also the debt of temporal punishment. In the author's own words:

Truly the guilt is forgiven in two ways, either that it may no longer remain unto damnation, or that it may not remain even unto punishment. Crimes are condoned in the first manner as soon as the heart is crushed by compunction. . . . God therefore forgets our offenses when He deems that those converted by compunction do not deserve hell. . . . Likewise to him who proposes to accuse himself to the priest, He remits not only the sin, but also the impiety of the sin, that is, both that he has sinned, and that he has failed so often and at such a

⁶⁹ *Sententiarum Theologicarum Libri Octo*, Liber VI, cap. 51: "Sicut enim compunctio nihil est sine spe, nec utrumque sine confessione; ita irria poenitentiae lamenta sunt, si cum tempus suppedit et possis, aut a presbytero non solum peccatum, verum etiam peccati impietatem, id est, et quod peccavit, et quod toties talique tempore, talique loco, tali item modo, et si quae similia sunt aliis quotquot generibus deliquit" (PL 186, 911 D).

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*: "Quisquis offendit, supplicii reus est; si supplicium refugit, offensae crescit" (PL 186, 901 C).

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, cap. 60 (PL 186, 908 D).

time, and in such a place, likewise in such a way, and if there are other like circumstances, in however many species.⁷²

Moreover, he adds, this remission must take place in this life. In vain does man hope for pardon of a mortal sin in the future if he leaves this life without pardon.

Mortal sin can be forgiven man in the second way, namely, so that it does not remain even unto punishment, either in this life or in the next.

But some are absolved from the punishment due to the crime now, some in the future; those are forgiven now who complete satisfaction before death; others are forgiven after death whose atonement is not completed until after death.⁷³

Those who are not absolved from punishment until the next life will suffer there the pains of purgatory which are far graver than any of the punishments of the present life.⁷⁴ It is therefore of great importance that satisfaction be performed in this life so that the temporal punishments of purgatory may be avoided. Hence Robert stresses that since man offends God by indulging in the evil sweets of sin, he must please God through some satisfaction painful to himself.⁷⁵ He likewise points out that the aim which the confessor should have in mind in the injunction of present penance is the avoidance of future punishment.⁷⁶

⁷² Liber VII, cap. 1: "Nimirum dupliciter culpa dimittitur, aut ne sit ulterius ad damnationem, aut nec saltem ad poenam. Primo genere vitia condonantur, quam cito cor compunctione conteritur. . . . Deus ergo nostras obliviscitur offensas, dum compunctione conversos non reputat pertinere ad gehennam. Item illi qui se apud sacerdotem accusare proponit, remittit non solum peccatum, verum etiam peccati impietatem, id est, et quod peccavit, et quod toties talique tempore, talique loco, tali item modo, et si quae similia sunt aliis quotquot generibus deliquit" (PL 186, 911 D).

⁷³ *Ibid.*: "Sed a delicti poena quidam modo, quidam solvantur in futuro; in modo, qui satisfactionem perficiunt ante mortem; illi post mortem quorum expiatio non consummatur nisi post mortem" (PL 186, 912 D).

⁷⁴ Liber VI, cap. 51 (PL 186, 901 C); cap. 59 (PL 186, 908 C); cap. 61 (PL 186, 910 D).

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, cap. 52 (PL 186, 902 A).

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* (PL 186, 902 B).

This satisfaction is not absolutely necessary in every case. True sorrow with hope of pardon is sufficient to bring salvation; hence in a case where it is impossible to assign or perform satisfaction, eternal life may be postponed, but it is not lost.⁷⁷ If, however, a sinner should contemn satisfaction when he is able to perform it, he will lose eternal life.⁷⁸

This doctrine about the persistence of temporal punishment after the forgiveness of sin and of its eternal punishment is thrown into greater relief by the comparison Robert makes between Baptism and Penance. In Baptism, the grace of God requires only faith in the receiver and thus remits all things gratis; the remission of sins achieved through Baptism requires no penance, no purgatorial punishment after the remission. On the other hand, while simple confession likewise achieves the complete removal of the guilt of sin (and eternal damnation), satisfaction is ordinarily required after that remission.⁷⁹

Therefore since the heavens are said to be opened in Baptism, why is that not also said in confession, unless on this account that after confession the fruits of penance remain, after Baptism they do not remain?⁸⁰

In summary, Robert taught that by reason of his sin, man is bound by a debt of temporal punishment even after the sin itself and the damnation deserved by that sin have been forgiven. In this life man may pay that debt of temporal punishment by satisfaction. In the next life, whatever punishment man has not remitted through satisfaction will be exacted in purgatory in a much more painful manner.

POSSIBILITY OF SATISFACTION

The possibility of man's performance of satisfaction as effective of its purpose does not form a special section of Robert's

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, cap. 58 (PL 186, 908 B).

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, cap. 59 (PL 186, 908 C); cf. cap. 51 (PL 186, 901 B).

⁷⁹ *Liber V*, cap. 27 (PL 186, 849 D-850 A).

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, cap. 29: "Cum igitur coeli dicantur aperti in baptisate, cur etiam id non dicitur in confessione, nisi ideo quod post confessionem restant fructus poenitentiae, post baptismum non restant?" (PL 186, 851 A).

doctrine. It is assumed, however, and stated at least equivalently. Thus, Robert everywhere urges and instructs men to perform satisfaction because of the fact that such performance will enable them to avoid in whole or in part the punishments of purgatory. Speaking of the necessity of confession and satisfaction, he states that "they are also necessary since present punishment diligently undertaken wards off the far greater future purgatorial punishments."⁸¹ To go even further, he states that once man has fulfilled the full temporal punishment due to his sins, whether that fulfillment be accomplished completely on earth, or partly on earth and partly in purgatory, he not only avoids further punishment, but gains eternal life.

When, however, the penance has been completed (not always that which man imposes but which God foreknows; indeed if man does less than he should, God completes it by purgatorial punishments, or in this world; nor is our satisfaction superfluous, since if it is full, it entirely removes; if it is less, it partly diminishes the scourge of God due to our prevarication); when the penance has been completed, I say, the guilty person is absolved by God, not only so that he no longer must be punished for sin, but also so that with the purgation completed he becomes fit for heaven.⁸²

CONDITIONS

There are likewise several conditions under which satisfaction must be performed. The person must be enjoying temporal life and the state of grace and charity. The former appears from the fact that Robert calls the punishment of satisfaction a present

⁸¹ *Liber VI*, cap. 59 (PL 186, 908 C).

⁸² *Ibid.*, cap. 61: "Peracta autem poenitentia (non semper quam homo imponit sed quam Deus praenovit; quippe si homo minus quam decet facit, Deus purgatoris id supplet poenis, aut in hoc saeculo; nec nostra superfluit satisfactio, quoniam si plena est, omnino tollit; sin vero diminuta, partim immunit flagellum Dei nostrae praevagationi debitum). Peracta, inquam, poenitentia, reus per Deum absolvitur, non solum ut non amplius pro peccato puniri oporteat, verum etiam ut purgatione facta coelo fiat idoneus" (PL 186, 910 D-911 A).

one⁸³ and also from the fact that he makes satisfaction the means by which temporal punishment is acquitted *before* death.⁸⁴

The possession of grace and charity is stressed even more. In the first place, repentance must extend to all mortal sins. And the man who continues to offend in even one mortal sin cannot be forgiven any mortal sins. For God either forgives all or none. Hence one who remains impenitent for even one sin "does not obtain from an angry God the favors to be given rather to the reconciled."⁸⁵

In the matter of confession also, Robert teaches the need of opening every wound in order to obtain forgiveness. "This, he states, holds true even if the sinner has contrition for all sins, including the one he holds back in confession, and performs satisfaction for all his confessed sins. In such a case,

you are nevertheless held guilty, since you are not yet absolved from the guilt, even though you have renounced it, until you begin to depose that which you may thus far embrace; knowing full well that penance of heart is of no value without confession of the mouth; and that confession, however, without penance is always unfruitful.⁸⁶

Contrition, confession, and absolution, however, precede satisfaction.⁸⁷ Yet, in contrition there must be repentance for all mortal sins, by which pardon is gained; confession must be made of all mortal sins, by which absolution for all is obtained. Those facts would seem to indicate a clear view in Robert's thought of the prerequisite of the state of grace for the performance of

⁸³ *Ibid.*, cap. 59 (PL 186, 908 C).

⁸⁴ Liber VII, cap. 1 (PL 186, 912 D).

⁸⁵ Liber V, cap. 30 (PL 186, 852 C); cap. 31: "qui autem vel in uno

impoenitens perseverat, ab irato munera Deo, reconciliatis potius danda, non impetrat" (PL 186, 852 D).

⁸⁶ Liber VI, cap. 51: "... nihilominus tamen reus teneris, quoniam a culpa, licet eam dimiseris, nondum es absolutus, donec si quam adhuc amplecteris, et illam deponere coeperis. Plane sciens poenitentiam cordis absque confessione oris nunquam valere; confessionem autem absque poenitentia semper infructuosam esse" (PL 186, 900 C).

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* (PL 186, 901 A); cf. Liber VII, cap. 1 (PL 186, 911 D).

Robert Pullen further teaches that fear of punishment is not enough for pardon through penance, but that love of God must predominate. If that were not enough to point to the need of charity for the performance of satisfaction, the conclusion he draws from St. Paul (I Cor. 13:3) will be more convincing: "whence he wished to have made known to us that everything is unpleasing to God, which however much it may be seen to glitter, is tasteless because it is not seasoned with charity."⁸⁸ Whatever is done outside charity cannot be of any advantage.

His thought is applied aptly to the lamentations of penance in the following explanation. To love iniquity is to hate one's soul; for to love iniquity is to be an evil tree. But an evil tree cannot produce good fruit. Therefore, "he who loves even one injustice, in the meanwhile performs no good deed."⁸⁹

Finally, Robert teaches expressly that impenitence of heart does not allow satisfaction for any sin to be made as long as that impenitence remains. Instructing the priest in the manner of dealing with impenitent souls, Robert cautions against any deception. One who is impenitent should be told that nothing but eternal damnation awaits him. And yet,

if he should happen to repent of that sin in the meantime, you should not deny pardon to one prepared to make satisfaction; not however in a reverse order, but then only when the impenitence for that sin shall have disappeared from the heart, which while it remained, did not allow satisfaction for any sin to thrive.⁹⁰

Therefore, before satisfaction may be enjoined or performed, the sinner must repent in his heart and manifest that repentance to

⁸⁸ Liber V, cap. 31: "Unde nobis innotuisse voluit omne illud fore Deo ingratum, quod quantumlibet fulgere visatur, ideo sordet quoniam cfiaritate non conditur" (PL 186, 853 C; cf. 853 A).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*: "... qui vel unam iniquitatem diligit, nullum interim bonum facit."

⁹⁰ Liber VI, cap. 57: "Et si quo interim de peccato poenitere contingat, satisfaciendi veniam non deneges: non tamen praepostere, verum tunc quando illius peccati impenitentia a corde recesserit; quod dum remanebat, nullius satisfactionem peccati vigere sinebat" (PL 186, 907 B).

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the priest through confession. That would seem to give definite proof of the need of the state of grace and charity.

There are likewise conditions to be fulfilled in the satisfactory work itself. It must proceed under the influence of grace, it must be freely performed, it must be a good act, it must contain a penal aspect.

First of all, Robert Pullen teaches that "the first and special cause of all good deeds is grace, which indeed precedes good works begun that they may exist, and follows them that they may remain."⁹¹ Salutory confession and therefore them that they may penance of the heart, are gifts of God and do not depend on the mere whim of the sinner.⁹² Therefore the confessor dealing with an impenitent sinner should counsel him to implore the gift of repentance from God through works of mercy and divine worship.⁹³

In the second place, while grace is the first and special cause of all good deeds, there must be the cooperation of free will. Indeed our free will has a definite, though secondary, authority over all our good deeds. It is within the power of free will, preceded by grace, to perform good works, and followed by grace to continue doing good. There is some merit in this cooperation of free will, because the will can also refuse to cooperate. Grace invites a sinner, but it can only lead one obedient; it draws one who is willing, and does not force him who is unwilling.⁹⁴

Finally, the satisfactory work must be good and at the same time penal. Both these conditions are implied when Robert states that "truly since we offend God by the pleasure of sin, it is necessary that we please Him by some satisfaction painful to us."⁹⁵ That the satisfactory work must be good follows from the fact that man must offer it to God in order to please Him.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, cap. 50: "Unde patet quod omnium bene gestorum prima praecipuaque causa gratia est; quippe quae bona coepta praevenit ut sub-

⁹² *Ibid.*, cap. 51 (PL 186, 896 D-897 A).

⁹³ *Ibid.*, cap. 57 (PL 186, 907 B).

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, cap. 50 (PL 186, 895 A).

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, cap. 52: "Nimirum quoniam dulcedine peccati Deum offendimus, necesse est ut aliqua satisfactione nobis anxia ipsum placeamus" (PL 186, 902 A).

A work which is painful to the performer is one containing a penal aspect. Besides, the very thought involved in satisfaction is the temporal punishment of sin. Expressly, Pullen states that discipline, at least, must contain a penal element. "Finally whatever is undertaken for discipline is deservedly disapproved if it admits nothing of bitterness."⁹⁶

SACRAMENTAL SATISFACTION

It may be noted here that Robert Pullen seems to treat exclusively of sacramental satisfaction. At least he makes no distinction between sacramental and extra-sacramental satisfaction. Yet he seems to suggest charity and works of mercy as extra means of removing the temporal punishment due to sin. He does not exclude them from the realm of sacramental satisfaction; he does seem to urge them at all times as means of satisfaction and merit.⁹⁷

Sacramental satisfaction is necessary. Robert Pullen, even though he admits that sins are forgiven through compunction of heart, nevertheless maintains that both confession and the fruits of penance are required, "because according to the statutes of the Church, whoever can attain those two and contemns [them], loses salvation."⁹⁸

Ordinarily satisfaction follows compunction of heart, hope of pardon, and confession.⁹⁹ Satisfaction is to be assigned by the confessor and performed by the penitent, ordinarily after absolution.

One of the reasons for confession is that the penitent may learn from it just what must be done to atone for his sins.¹⁰⁰ "Therefore following authority we should open the uncleanness of a more grievous sin to the priest, and should take care to purge it for as much time as he commands."¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ Liber VII, cap. 3: "Postremo quidquid pro disciplina suscipitur, si nihil admittit acedimus, merito reprobatum" (PL 186, 915 C).

⁹⁷ Liber VI, cap. 52 (PL 186, 903 B).

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, cap. 59 (PL 186, 908 C).

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, cap. 51 (PL 186, 901 A).

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, cap. 59 (PL 186, 908 C).

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, cap. 51: "Auctoritatem ergo sequentes gravioris leprae im-

In his turn, the priest should provide present punishment for those placed in his charge in order that they may avoid future punishment.¹⁰²

First asking God's help, the priest should consider these circumstances: "who, what, where, by what means, why, how, when," for according to the quality of these circumstances, the quality of the deed is known; and from the deed the lesser or greater guilt.¹⁰³

Only after he knows the case should the priest assign satisfaction according to the guilt.

Having taken cognizance of the case, since no sin remains unpunished (for God is not merciful to all those who perform iniquity, taking vengeance on all their inventions [Ps. 98:8]), the priest should estimate the worthy (*condignam*) punishment he will impose on the guilty party according to: Bring forth fruits befitting repentance (Luke 3:8).¹⁰⁴

Satisfaction according to the guilt does not mean weighing only the quantity and quality of the sins, but also what the condition of the penitent can support. The priest is advised to consider what the strength of each penitent is able to bear, what it would refuse to bear; "let him make plain what is due to the fault in justice (*iure*), in order that the sinner may be humbled; let him, however, impose what can be sustained."¹⁰⁵

The general rule, however, is that satisfaction be proportioned to the quantity and quality of the sin. Indeed, the confessor should not favor the penitent by unduly mitigating the assignment of satisfaction. The fact is

munditiam sacerdoti pandamus, et quanto iusserit tempore purgare curemus" (PL 186, 897 C).

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, cap. 52 (PL 186, 902 B).

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, cap. 52 (PL 186, 902 B).

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, cap. 52 (PL 186, 901 C-D).

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*: "Cognita causa quoniam nullum peccatum impunitum (Deus adinventiones eorum [Ps. 98:8]), sacerdos poenam condignam reo impositurus excogitet, iuxta illud: Facite dignos fructus poenitentiae (Luc. 3:3) . . ." (PL 186, 901 D).

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* (PL 186, 901 D-902 A).

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if the priest does not punish as is necessary. God adds punishment over and above, either in the future in purgatorial fires, or in this life in various ways, at one time affecting the penitent with confusion, at another time afflicting him with a cross, sometimes by taking away those things which he held dear.¹⁰⁶

Because the flame of punishment for sin is suffered either in the present by satisfaction or in the future by the more painful flames of purgatory,¹⁰⁷ the priest should assign penance proportioned to the guilt.

Since true penance necessarily includes the amendment of life, it is likewise fitting that the priest should assign satisfaction according to the kind of sin; hence the vice should be overcome by the practice of the opposite virtue as penance.

For it is necessary that we wipe away by the bitterness of punishment that which we have committed in pleasure, and nothing seems more fitting than that we apply remedies contrary to the evils.¹⁰⁸

Only after these two considerations does the condition of the penitent enter. The penance should be assigned according to the quantity and quality of the crime.

However, if the frailty of the sinner is so great that he is able to bear neither the quality nor the quantity of satisfaction, some such punishment is to be sought which his strength does not refuse, and which torments the guilty person.¹⁰⁹

The problem is not insoluble because there is some satisfaction

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*: "Si non, ut oportet, sacerdos punit, poenam Deus superaddit, aut in futuro ignibus purgatoris, aut in hoc saeculo variis modis poenitentem nunc confusione afficiens, nunc cruciatu caelens, nonnunquam quae chara habebat tollens" (PL 186, 902 D).

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* (PL 186, 902 A).

¹⁰⁸ Liber VII, cap. 3: "Necesse est enim ut quod voluptate deliquimus, castigationis amaritudine detergamus, nihilque convenientius videtur, quam ut contrariis opponamus remedia" (PL 186, 914 C).

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*: "Si tamen tanta est fragilitas praevericatoris, ut nec qualitatem nec quantitatem ferre queat satisfactionis, aliquid tale inquirendum est, quod nec vires recusat, et reum excruciet" (PL 186, 914 D).

which the nature of each penitent can bear.¹¹⁰ The priest's primary interest in satisfaction is that the penitent avoid the more excruciating pains of purgatory; yet he is more fundamentally interested in the saving of souls even through punishment. Therefore "the doctor should provide for the patient that kind of cure which can be a remedy, not an increase of the sickness."¹¹¹

It follows from the above that no satisfaction is to be imposed upon those who are seriously ill or upon the dying. The priest's concern in such cases is to endeavor to arouse true sorrow and hope of pardon in the penitent, for by these he will be saved. The lack of a full measure of satisfaction will not cause his soul to be lost, provided he has not despised the performance of satisfaction. In case of his recovery, however, the priest should then impose penance.¹¹²

On the part of the penitent, Robert also demands prudence. Here appears the reason for his insistence on the consideration of the penitent's strength in the assignment of satisfaction—the fact that too great a burden of penance may discourage the sinner from performing any satisfaction at all.

Let each one, however, avoid taking upon himself an unsupported burden, lest necessity force him to fall under the load not rightly imposed by the priest. For while those who impose oppressive burdens on men's shoulders are refuted by the Lord (Matt. 23:4); the ones who take up those burdens are insinuated as deserving little praise; for what is unsupported must everywhere be refused.¹¹³

But having made this consideration, the penitent should undertake what his strength can and should bear, and perform it diligently.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ Liber VI, cap. 52 (PL 186, 902 A).

¹¹² *Ibid.*, cap. 58 (PL 186, 908 A-B).

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, cap. 51: "Quisquis tamen caveat onus importabile sibi assumere, ne necessitas cogat sub fasce a presbytero non recte imposita succumbere. Dum enim qui onera importabilia in humeros hominum imponunt, a Domino redarguntur (Matt. 23:4); hi qui imposita suscipiunt, minime laudandi insinuantur: quod enim importabile est, usquequaque recusari debet" (PL 186, 901 B).

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

Probably for the first time there appears the definite statement that the penitent is to perform this assigned satisfaction after he receives absolution. First of all Robert states that "he who is held subject to punishment because he has not yet completed the fruits of penance, having performed those things so that he is already worthy of rest, is absolved."¹¹⁵ If that statement admits of equivocation, Robert's further explanation does not. The weakness which increases the difficulty of doing good after sin might well prevent the penitent from performing his satisfaction. But he receives strength through sacramental absolution.

Indeed whoever through confession directs himself to the fruits of penance (which he is now able to do strengthened by that absolution which takes place in confession) is bound by punishment until their completion.¹¹⁶

One final statement confirms the truth. "After confession and absolution, there is need (for the sake of satisfaction and even of religion) of discipline, prayer, and almsgiving."¹¹⁷

PETER LOMBARD (ca. 1100–1160)

Any study of the development of theological thought must inevitably turn to the "Master of the Sentences," author of the greatest theological text-book of the Middle Ages, professor of theology at Paris, and later Bishop of Paris.

He was born in Lumello near Novara, then in Lombardy, some time around the turn of the twelfth century. Very little is known with certainty about his early life in Italy. His parents were both poor and obscure, but good fortune provided him with a patron in the Bishop of Lucca. Peter Lombard arrived at Rheims

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, cap. 60: "Qui vero fructibus poenitentiae nondum expletis poenae obnoxius tenetur, is ea peracta, ut jam dignus sit requie, absolvitur" (PL 186, 909 A).

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*: "Quisquis vero per confessionem poenitentiae fructibus intendit (quod jam potest ea quae in confessione fit absolute robortatus) is usque ad peractos, obligatur poenae" (PL 186, 909 D).

¹¹⁷ Liber VII, cap. 1: "Post confessionem et absolutionem, opus est (causa satisfactionis, imo et religionis) disciplina, oratione, elemosyna" (PL 186, 911 D).

some time between 1136-1139, probably closer to the earlier date. Here he was aided by St. Bernard at the request of the Bishop of Lucca. After a short stay at Rheims, he proceeded to the school at the Abbey of Saint-Victor in Paris, armed with a letter of recommendation from St. Bernard. His works give evidence of intimate contact with the ideas of both the Victorine and Abelardian schools.

He probably occupied the Chair of Theology at the school of Notre Dame. He also took a prominent part in the judgment of Gilbert de la Porrée at the Council of Rheims in 1148, at which Pope Eugene III presided. Chosen Bishop of Paris, he was consecrated in 1159 and died just about a year later on July 21 or 22, 1160.

Peter Lombard's *Quattuor Libri Sententiarum* (ca. 1148) filled a crying need of the time, the demand for a compendium of the theological doctrine. He was the first to achieve a collection of the traditional teaching on Catholic Doctrine. Therefore his work became and continued to be a kind of *terminus a quo* for future treatments of theological thought. In the special field of the sacraments, his work is just as remarkable. While the seven sacraments had been named in some writings of the early twelfth century, and the notion of a sacrament was quite clear in the *Summa Sententiarum*, ". . . Peter emphasized so strongly the distinction between the sacraments properly so called, efficacious signs of grace, and the other rites which are mere signs, that the word sacrament came to be used exclusively to designate our seven sacramental rites."¹¹⁸ He therefore consecrated the septenary number, and caused the definitive acceptance of the septenary separating systematically the treatment of the sacraments from the other parts of theology.¹¹⁹

NATURE OF SATISFACTION

That Penance had not been previously treated as a sacrament in the scientific manner seems to be evident from the Master's work. And in the more restricted field of satisfaction, there is

¹¹⁸ P. Pourrat, *Theology of the Sacraments* (trans. from 3rd French edition: St. Louis: Herder, 1910), p. 272.
¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 273.

not yet the clear-cut distinction between sacramental¹ and extra-sacramental satisfaction.

Peter Lombard at times seems to imply or signify satisfaction when he actually uses the more general term of penance. At other times, however, he specifically names satisfaction as a part of the sacrament of Penance. For example: "In the perfection of Penance, however, three steps are to be observed, namely, compunction of heart, confession of the mouth, satisfaction in deed."¹²⁰

His definition of satisfaction is that given by Gennadius,¹²¹ though attributed by the Master and those who followed him to Saint Augustine. "For the satisfaction of penance, as Augustine says, is to root out the causes of sin, and not to allow entrance to their suggestions."¹²²

Although Peter Lombard assumed this definition of Gennadius which directs satisfaction primarily to the future and indicates pre-eminently the medicinal and preservative aspect of satisfaction,¹²³ he is nevertheless cognizant also of its vindictive character. In several places he states that satisfaction or, in its absence, the depth of contrition remove the pains of purgatory otherwise awaiting man after death only when they "suffice for the punishment of the crime."¹²⁴

SATISFACTORY WORKS

The works by which this punishment is achieved are classed as prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.¹²⁵ It should be noted that Peter Lombard also mentions the shame involved in confession as part of the punishment of sin:

¹²⁰ *Liber IV Sententiarum*, Dist. XVI, cap. 1, n. 159, p. 839.

¹²¹ *De Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus*, 54 (PL 58, 994 C).

¹²² *Liber IV*, Dist. XV, cap. 3, n. 148, p. 832: "Est enim satisfactio poenitentiae, ut ait Augustinus, peccatorum causas excidere, nec suggestionibus earum aditum indulgere."

¹²³ Cf. St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, *Supplementum*, q. 12, a. 3, c., ad 3um, ad 4um; *In Librum IVum Sent.*, Dist. XV, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 3.

¹²⁴ *Liber IV*, Dist. XX, cap. 1, n. 203, p. 874; cf. *ibid.*, cap. 2, n. 204, p. 875; cap. 3, n. 206, p. 876; Dist. XVII, cap. 5, n. 177, p. 857.

¹²⁵ Dist. XVI, cap. 6, nn. 163-164, p. 844.

... the confession of sin involves shame, and the shame itself is a grave punishment; and therefore we are commanded to confess our sins, in order that we may suffer shame for a punishment, for this itself is a part of the divine judgment.¹²⁶

EFFECT OF SATISFACTION

The effect of satisfaction is the remission of the temporal punishment due to already forgiven sin. Peter taught that while God in His mercy forgives mortal sin and the debt of eternal punishment, in justice He does not allow sin to go unpunished. After this present life God provides punishment in the fire of purgatory. Man is given the opportunity and obligation to escape those fires by performing satisfaction in this present life.

NECESSITY OF SATISFACTION

For the necessity of satisfaction, Lombard advances the command of St. John the Baptist recorded in the Gospel.¹²⁷ He states that "satisfaction is commanded by John, where he says, 'bring forth fruits befitting repentance. . .'"¹²⁸ Therefore fruits of penance which must suffice for the punishment of his sin must be performed by man.

The punishment to be remitted through satisfaction is the temporal punishment due to sin even after its remission. That fact is clearly revealed from a study of Peter Lombard's doctrine on the forgiveness of sins.

God forgives man for mortal sin as soon as he proposes, moved by contrition and humility of heart, to confess his sin. In treating the question, Peter Lombard points out that there are two opinions on the forgiveness of sin. One group holds that no one can be cleansed from mortal sin without confession and satisfaction if there is time for them. The other group maintains that God forgives sin as soon as there is contrition of heart with

¹²⁶ Dist. XVII, cap. 5, n. 177, p. 857: "... confessio peccati pudorem habet, et ipsa erubescencia est gravis poena: ideoque inbemur confiteri peccata, ut erubescenciam patiamur pro poena: nam hoc ipsum pars est divini iudicii."

¹²⁷ Luke 3:8; Matt. 3:8.

¹²⁸ Dist. XVI, cap. 2, n. 160, p. 840.

the resolve to go to confession, even though confession and satisfaction have not yet taken place.¹²⁹ After presenting the various authorities introduced in defense of the two positions, he concludes,

certainly without confession of mouth and performance of exterior punishment, sins are effaced through contrition and humility of heart. For from the moment one proposes to confess, being pricked in conscience, God forgives; because in that case there is confession of heart, although not of the mouth, through which the soul is cleansed within from the stain and contagion of the sin committed, and the debt of eternal death is relaxed.¹³⁰

This forgiveness, granted to the sinner possessing contrition and the resolution to confess, remits both the sin and the eternal punishment due to it. Moreover, that forgiveness is simultaneous, for just as God "illuminates the soul within by His grace, in like manner and at the same time He relaxes the debt of eternal death."¹³¹

It is conformable to right reason that the forgiveness of mortal sin should include the remission of the debt of eternal punishment. For no one is truly grieved over his sin, having a contrite and humble heart, unless in charity; however, he who is in charity is worthy of life; since no one can be at the same time worthy of life and death, he is therefore no longer bound by the debt of eternal death; he ceased to be a son of wrath at the moment when he began to love and to repent.¹³²

In granting such forgiveness Almighty God shows forth His mercy. His justice, however, does not permit that the sin go unpunished. Man must punish his sin or God will do so.

¹²⁹ Dist. XVII, cap. 1, n. 165, p. 845.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, n. 167, p. 848: "Sane, quod sine confessione oris et solutione poenae exterioris, peccata delentur per contritionem et humilitatem cordis. Ex quo enim proponit mente compuncta, se confessurum, Deus dimittit; quia ibi est confessio cordis, etsi non oris, per quam anima interiorius mundatur a macula et contagio peccati commisi, et debitum aeternae mortis relaxatur."

¹³¹ Dist. XVIII, cap. 4, n. 182, p. 859: "... et ideo, sicut interioris gratia sua animam illuminat, ita et simul debitum aeternae mortis relaxat."

¹³² *Ibid.*, n. 184, p. 860.

For God, since He is both merciful and just, forgives the penitent out of mercy, not retaining the sin unto eternal punishment; but indeed out of justice He does not discharge the sin unpunished. For either man punishes it, or God does so; man, however, punishes it by doing penance.¹³³

It may occasionally happen that the depth of contrition will be so vehement that it will render exterior satisfaction unnecessary.

But that interior sorrow sometimes suffices for the punishment of sin, we have certain proof in that thief who by contrition of mind only and by confession, as soon as he was converted, merited entrance to paradise.¹³⁴

Ordinarily contrition will not completely suffice for the punishment of the crime; hence it follows that if man does not perform the punishment by voluntary satisfaction, God will supply punishment elsewhere. Peter Lombard, considering the case of a sinner who is converted at the end of his life, admits that a late but sincere penitent will be saved, but only through purgatorial punishment.

But even if one thus converted lives and does not die, we do not promise that he escapes all punishment: for before that he must be purged in the fire of purgation who put off to another world the fruit of conversion.¹³⁵

The fire of purgatory, while not an eternal punishment, is nevertheless very grave and far more painful than every punishment ever suffered by anyone in the present life. This is true even

¹³³ Dist. XX, cap. 2, n. 204, p. 875: "Deus enim, cum sit misericors et poenam aeternam; ex misericordia poenitentem ignoscit, non reservans peccatum ad eum homo punit; ex iustitia vero impunitum non dimittit delictum. Aut

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, cap. 3, n. 206, p. 876: "Quod autem, interdum sufficiat (dolor in) sola mentis contritione et confessione, certum documentum habemus in illo latrone, qui ingredi meruit."

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, cap. 1, n. 202, p. 874: "Sed si etiam sic conversus vita vivat et non moriatur, non promittimus, quod evadat omnem poenam; nam prius purgandus est igne purgationis, qui in aliud saeculum distulit fructum conversionis."

though the wondrous torments of the martyrs or the worthless punishments of others be considered; the punishment of purgatory has not been approached by any suffering in the flesh.¹³⁶ It is therefore of great importance to escape that punishment. Toward that end, "just as interior penance is prescribed for us, so also are confession of mouth and exterior satisfaction, if there is opportunity."¹³⁷

The necessity of satisfaction for the remission of the temporal punishment due to sin is likewise stressed by Peter Lombard in the distinction he draws between baptismal and extra-baptismal justification. The question he proposes concerns the value of Baptism to one who approaches Baptism with faith and charity and already sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

To this it can be rightly said that they are indeed justified through faith and contrition, that is, purged from the stain of sin and absolved from the debt of eternal punishment, but are thus far held by temporal satisfaction, by which penitents are bound in the Church. When, however, they receive Baptism, they are both cleansed from their sins, if they have committed any in the interim after conversion, and are absolved from exterior satisfaction. . . .¹³⁸

POSSIBILITY OF SATISFACTION

Peter Lombard does not offer an explicit treatment of the possibility of man's performance of satisfaction. He may be said, however, to assume or insinuate that possibility. First of all he states that punishment awaits man in purgatory only because he has postponed the fruits of conversion which he could have performed on earth.¹³⁹ There are others who go to purga-

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ Dist. XVII, cap. 1, n. 167, p. 848.

¹³⁸ Dist. IV, cap. 5-6, n. 48, pp. 769-770: "Ad quod sane dici potest, eos quidem per fidem et contritionem iustificatos, id est a macula peccati purgatos et a debito aeternae poenae absolutos, tamen adhuc teneri satisfactione temporalis, qua poenitentes ligantur in Ecclesia. Cum autem baptismum percipiunt, et a peccatis, si qua interim post conversionem contraxerunt, mundantur et ab exteriori satisfactione absolventur. . . ."

¹³⁹ Dist. XX, cap. 1, n. 202, p. 874.

tory only because they have failed to complete their penance in this world. He therefore urges them so to correct their sins in this life, that after death they will not need to endure punishment.¹⁴⁰ Following St. Jerome, Peter likewise states that light or trivial sins are atoned for by light punishment on earth; grievous sins, however, are punished heavily on earth and, if penance has not been done during the earthly chastisement, they are likewise punished eternally in the next life.¹⁴¹

CONDITIONS

Peter does give in some detail the conditions applicable to the performance of satisfaction.

1. The first condition of satisfaction is that it must be performed during earthly life. "It is also to be known that the time of penance is until the last moment of life."¹⁴² Moreover, it follows from that statement that temporal life is the exclusive time of penance. It is possible to have true repentance even in the last moment of life, but it is very difficult. Indeed the sinner who postpones penance and satisfaction to the end of life takes a serious chance of condemning himself in eternity.¹⁴³ That would not be true if the time of penance and satisfaction went beyond this life. Besides, the penitent who fails to purge himself of the temporal punishment due to sin in this life by performing the fruits of conversion will be purged in the fire of purgatory in the next world.¹⁴⁴ Man punishes himself by satisfaction in this life; otherwise God punishes man in purgatory in the future life.¹⁴⁵

2. The second condition is that man must be in the state of grace and in possession of charity in order to perform satisfaction. The general principle which implies all that must follow is borrowed from St. Augustine:

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, cap. 2, n. 204, p. 875.

¹⁴¹ Dist. XV, cap. 3, n. 145, p. 830.

¹⁴² Dist. XX, cap. 1, n. 201, p. 872.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*; cf. nn. 202-203, pp. 873-874.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, n. 202, p. 874.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, cap. 2, n. 204, p. 875.

These things are said for the sake of charity, without which there cannot be any true penance in us, since in the good there is the charity of God which endures all things.¹⁴⁶

True penance demands charity; satisfaction, however, demands true penance. Treating of the injunction of satisfaction by priests, Lombard states:

And it must be noted that those whom they bind by the satisfaction of penance, they show by that very fact to be loosed from sins, because penitential satisfaction is not imposed on anyone unless the priest judges him truly penitent; he does not impose it on another, and by that fact indicates that the sin is retained by God.¹⁴⁷

Peter Lombard spends the entire Fifteenth Distinction with the single aim of proving in greater detail the necessity of repentance and satisfaction for all mortal sins at the same time; hence he demands the state of grace for true repentance and satisfaction. At times Peter seems to be speaking only of interior penance or complete conversion of heart. Yet it seems also that his position maintains that no man can offer anything which is pleasing to God and effective in remitting punishment unless that man himself is pleasing to God. The only soul pleasing to God is one possessing sanctifying grace and charity. That Peter speaks principally of satisfaction here is the opinion of St. Bonaventure in his analysis of the Fifteenth Distinction. "Here he disproves the error which concerns the partition of penance; and this most of all with reference to satisfaction."¹⁴⁸

The error here rejected by Peter Lombard held that a penitent,

¹⁴⁶ Dist. XV, cap. 7, n. 155, pp. 835-836: "Haec propter caritatem dicta sunt, sine qua in nobis non potest esse vera poenitentia, quoniam in bonis caritas Dei est, quae tolerat omnia."

¹⁴⁷ Dist. XVIII, cap. 6, n. 187, p. 863: "Et notandum, quia quos satisfactio poenitentiae ligant, eo ipso a peccatis solutos ostendunt, quia non imponitur alicui satisfactio poenitentialis, nisi quem sacerdos vere poenitentem arbitrat; alii non imponit et eo ipso peccatum retineri a Deo indicat."

¹⁴⁸ In *Uvon Librum Sententiarum*, Dist. XV, pars I, p. 349: "Hic reprobat errorem, qui consistit quantum ad poenitentiae divisionem; et hoc maxime ratione satisfactionis."

guilty of several mortal sins, could truly repent of one of them and actually obtain pardon for that one from God without any repentance for the other sins. The basis for that opinion was the statement of the Prophet: "there shall not arise a double affliction."¹⁴⁹ According to this position, if a person shall have confessed one of several sins to the priest and shall have fulfilled the satisfaction enjoined by the priest, even though he remained silent concerning his other sins, he is not to be judged again for the sin confessed and for which he has already made satisfaction according to the judgment of the priest. If he were to be judged a second time, a double affliction would arise.¹⁵⁰

Peter rules out such a position, insisting that the words of the Prophet apply only to those who, by their punishments, are changed for the better and who persevere in the way of goodness. This required change for the better obviously could not be realized in one who, though making satisfaction for one sin, remains in other sins. On the contrary, one who insists on remaining in sin while punishment is visited upon him becomes increasingly worse; for him temporal pain is the beginning of eternal punishment.¹⁵¹

Temporal affliction, therefore, does not mean the end of punishment, unless it is accompanied by amendment, by true penance. There are five reasons for which the trials of life may be inflicted, not just one reason.

For chastisement befalls us in five ways: either that the merits of the just may be increased by patience, like Job; or for the preservation of virtues, lest pride should tempt us, like Paul; or for the correcting of sins, like Mary's leprosy, or for the glory of God, like the man born blind; or for the beginning of punishment, like Herod, that here may be seen what happens in hell, according to this saying: "Consume them with double contrition, oh Lord."¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ Nah. 1, 9.

¹⁵⁰ *Liber IV*, Dist. XV, cap. 1, n. 141, p. 828.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, n. 142.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, cap. 2, n. 143, p. 829.

"Quinque enim modis flagella contingunt: vel ut justis merita per patientiam augeantur, ut Job; vel ad custodiam virtutum, ne superbia tentet, ut Paulo; vel ad corrigenda peccata, sicut Mariae

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Therefore the statement from Nahum cannot mean that any sins which are punished temporally will not be further punished by God. Some are corrected by temporal punishment; others are punished here and forever.

By giving the proper explanation of several texts from the Fathers, and by substantiating his own view with other texts from like authorities, Lombard proves that not only are all the pains of life without satisfactory value unless true repentance precedes them, but that also even the constant and most lavish almsgiving is in vain unless correction of life be the foundation. In fact, the beginning of true almsgiving is the showing of mercy to one's own soul through correction of life.¹⁵³

He concludes:

From the foregoing it is given to be understood, that those remaining in mortal sin, although they may give bountiful alms, nevertheless do not make satisfaction through them because they act inordinately, since they do not begin from themselves. Nor is such a deed properly called almsgiving, as long as they appear cruel to themselves, not pleasing God. Therefore, that is not to be termed satisfaction for sin, which a person performs for one sin, while he remains in another; because "it is of no advantage to fast and pray and perform other good works, unless the mind be recalled from sin;" and if at some time converted, such a one shall have confessed the unmentioned sin to the priest, satisfaction should be imposed on him for both [sins], because he has not made condign satisfaction for the first.¹⁵⁴

Evidently some of the Master's predecessors or contemporaries held the opinion that such satisfaction, performed by a penitent remaining in mortal sin, was actually true satisfaction, but unfruitful so long as the person remained in that other sin. Yet he would receive the fruit of that satisfaction as soon as he repented of that other sin. For then both sins would be for-

lepra; vel ad gloriam Dei, ut de caeco nato; vel ad initium poenae, ut Herodi, quatenus hic videtur, quid in inferno sequatur, secundum illud: 'Duplici contritione conterere eos.'

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, cap. 3-5, nn. 144-151, pp. 829-833.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, cap. 6, n. 152, pp. 833-834.

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given, and the preceding satisfaction, which was dead, would be vivified.¹⁵⁵

This opinion, drawn from texts of St. Augustine and St. Jerome, concludes that God will always reward and be delighted with the good He "has planted in the one sinning," and will cause the good deeds planted in good ground to be harvested and gathered into the barn.¹⁵⁶

Peter Lombard, however, opposes the view by giving the proper interpretation of the authorities. The only good deeds which find reward at the throne of God are those performed in charity.¹⁵⁷ Hence the texts of Augustine and Jerome refer to one who at one time in charity performs many good deeds and is good, and who at another time commits many sins and is evil; the person referred to is not one who, at the same time, both committed sins and performed many good works, but one who at different times performed both kinds of deeds. Hence when the evils in such a man have been destroyed, the good deeds he had performed in charity before his sins and which had been rendered lifeless by his sins, are both vivified and rewarded, once he has done penance for his sins.¹⁵⁸
The Master concludes:

And in like manner God loves that good, which He has planted in the sinner, in him that is, who after that good deed has sinned, not who has appeared sinning and doing good at the same time; because God would not love the work of such a man unto reward.¹⁵⁹

But supposing that there were such good works in one who performed them while in the state of sin, Peter will admit only some effect toward a more tolerable acceptance of punishment in the judgment. For "those works are said to be rewarded by

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, n. 153, p. 834.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ Dist. XIV, cap. 1-2, n. 136, p. 822.

¹⁵⁸ Dist. XV, cap. 6, n. 154, p. 834.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 835: "Similiter et illud bonum amat Deus, quod plantavit in

bene operans exstitit; quia talis hominis opus non diligeret Deus ad remunerationem."

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God and not given over to oblivion, not because they help in obtaining eternal life, but toward receiving a more tolerable punishment in the last judgment.¹⁶⁰

Even good acts which were performed in charity lose their value through a subsequent unrepented mortal sin. With how much more reason must it be said that good acts performed in the state of mortal sin are of no avail toward eternal life.¹⁶¹

Further, the very notion of a person being able to offer satisfaction to God, and at the same time remaining in mortal sin, involves a contradiction. For it would involve in the penitent at one time, the state of friendship and of enmity with God. God will heal from sin only those whom He heals entirely.¹⁶²

From the foregoing, Lombard concludes his point to be proven and a better knowledge given of true penance and satisfaction. His final statement provides further foundation for assuming that he has spoken of satisfaction in these general statements on penance.

From what has gone before there arises a clear notion of true penance and satisfaction. For that is true penance which destroys sin; which that alone does which amends the crime; that indeed amends the crime, which produces hatred of the crime committed or [possibly] to be committed with the desire of making satisfaction.¹⁶³

Peter Lombard also seems to insinuate or imply certain conditions on the part of the work offered as satisfaction. Indeed his terminology is not what we have come to expect in later times, but the facts are apparently in his teaching.

1. The penal character of a satisfactory work seems sufficiently indicated when the Master of the Sentences makes the following statement:

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, cap. 7, n. 155, p. 835: "... quae dicuntur remunerari a Deo et non dari oblivioni, non quia proficiant ad vitam aeternam obtinendam, sed ad tolerabilius extremi iudicii supplicium sentiendum . . ."

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, n. 156, p. 836.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, n. 157, pp. 836-837.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 838: "Ex praenotata perspicua fit notitia verae poenitentiae et satisfactionis. Illa enim vera est poenitentia, quae peccatum abolet; quod illa sola facit, quae scelus corrigit; illa vero scelus corrigit, quae odium commissi criminis et committendi cum desiderio satisfaciendi affert."

If it is therefore asked, why is confession necessary, since the sin has already been remitted in contrition, we say, because it is a certain punishment of sin, just as is the satisfaction by deed.¹⁶⁴

Likewise, when Peter Lombard answers different questions about the possibility of various types of penitents suffering in purgatory, he states as a principle that those who do not fulfill or complete their penance on earth must be purged in the fire of purgatory. He excepts only those whose interior conversion is sufficient for the punishment of their sins.¹⁶⁵

2. The work must proceed from the freedom of the will, not from necessity. Such seems to be Peter Lombard's intention in repeating the warning given to those who would postpone repentance.

Let no one wait for the moment when he is not able to sin. For let him seek the freedom of choice, not necessity in order that he may be able to efface the sins committed.¹⁶⁶

3. True satisfaction must also be aided by God; hence it must be supernatural, at least so far as the help of actual grace is concerned. Again Peter Lombard does not use these specific terms. But after concluding that confession and satisfaction are commanded where there is opportunity for them, even though sin and the debt of eternal death are forgiven to one truly sorry, he states: "And just as the remission of sin is the function of God, in like manner there cannot be penance and confession, through which sin is removed, except from God."¹⁶⁷ Then, borrowing from St. Augustine, he adds that one who confesses and does penance has the gift of the Holy Spirit, because there cannot be confession of sin and punishment of sin in man of himself.¹⁶⁸ Dealing with the question of sinners who repent late

¹⁶⁴ Dist. XVII, cap. 5, n. 177, p. 857.

¹⁶⁵ Dist. XX, cap. 1-3, nn. 202-206, pp. 874-876.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, cap. 1, n. 202, p. 873.

¹⁶⁷ Dist. XVII, cap. 1, n. 167, p. 848.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.* "Et sicut peccati remissio munus esse nisi a Deo . . ."

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.* "per quam peccatum deletur, non potest

in life, Peter again points to fruitful penance as the work of God.

Late penance is accustomed to deceive many. But since God is always mighty, He can always help even in death those whom He will. Since therefore fruitful penance is the work, not of man but of God, He can inspire it whenever He wills by His mercy, and can reward out of mercy those whom in justice He could condemn.¹⁶⁹

4. A satisfactory work must be a good work. That is apparent in the Fifteenth Distinction where Peter teaches man can offer satisfaction only by pleasing God.

SACRAMENTAL SATISFACTION

Peter Lombard makes no explicit distinction between satisfaction performed extra-sacramentally and satisfaction as a specific part of the sacrament.

In the first part of his treatment on Penance, however, Peter seems to point to a satisfaction which flows rather from the virtue of penance alone than from the priestly injunction. Having established that the virtue of penance or interior penance consists in weeping over the evils committed and resolving at the same time not to repeat their commission, he concludes:

Therefore he who thus recalls his mind from evils, so that he bewails what was committed, and wills not to commit what must be lamented, and does not neglect to make satisfaction, does penance truly.¹⁷⁰

It must be freely admitted, however, that Peter may intend to imply the entire process of confession or exterior penance when he speaks of the satisfaction which must not be neglected. In

¹⁶⁹ Dist. XX, cap. 1, n. 202, p. 874: "Multos solet serotina poenitentia decipere. Sed quoniam Deus semper potens est, semper, etiam in morte, iuvare valet quibus placet. Cum igitur opus sit non hominis sed Dei fructifera poenitentia, inspirare eam potest, quancumque vult sua misericordia, et remunerare ex misericordia, quos damnare potest ex iustitia."

¹⁷⁰ Dist. XIV, cap. 1-2, n. 135, p. 822: "Qui ergo a malis sic mentem revocat, ut commissa plangat, et plangenda committere non velit, nec satisfacere negligat, vere poenitet."

view of the fact that he teaches the necessity of confession and satisfaction where possible, it may even be more probable that he intends to imply both confession and satisfaction in this case.

There is no doubt about Peter's doctrine concerning the need of sacramental satisfaction. As has been seen, he makes satisfaction one of the three parts or steps in the perfection of Penance. In discussing satisfaction itself, Peter stresses the power and obligation of the priest to assign penance to the penitent. Dealing with the Power of the Keys as exercised by the priest himself, he states:

Priests also bind when they impose the satisfaction of penance on penitents; they loose when they remit something of it, or when they admit those purged through it to the communion of the sacraments.¹⁷¹

The satisfaction of penance to which priests bind penitents in exercising a work of justice is the bond of temporal punishment.¹⁷² Finally, when Peter describes true or genuine satisfaction, he advises the penitent to place himself entirely in the judgment and power of the priest and to be prepared to do whatever the priest commands him for the sake of his soul.¹⁷³

Sacramental satisfaction must be proportioned to the quality and quantity of the crime. For when St. John the Baptist commanded the performance of satisfaction in the words: "Bring forth fruits befitting repentance," he intended that the quality and quantity of the penance be according to the quality and quantity of the guilt. There cannot be equal fruits of good work demanded both of him who sinned slightly and of him who sinned more gravely.¹⁷⁴

In order to assign a proportioned penance, the priest must know the quantity and quality of the sins; hence there is need in the penitent for that discretion by which he will be able to confess not merely the fact of commission of such and such a sin, but also the attendant circumstances which may have affected it.

¹⁷¹ Dist. XVIII, cap. 6, n. 187, p. 863.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, cap. 1, n. 178, p. 857.

¹⁷³ Dist. XVI, cap. 2, n. 160, p. 841.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 840; cf. Dist. XX, cap. 4, n. 208, p. 877.

Thus a sin will be affected by circumstances of place, time, person sinning, force of temptation, perseverance in sin. All these are to be confessed, not merely as a fulfillment of the obligation of confession, but, in addition, for the purpose of rendering possible the assignment of a proportioned penance.¹⁷⁵ "Through confession . . . the priest understands how he ought to judge concerning the crime. . . ."¹⁷⁶

In further explanation of proportioned satisfaction, Peter adds that there may be many worthy fruits of virtues which do not suffice for penitents; to fulfill true satisfaction, the penitent must perform fruits befitting repentance. This, he states, refers to satisfaction for greater crimes, because while the fruits of virtue would be sufficient to satisfy for lesser or slight sins, they do not suffice for more serious delinquencies. Yet even fruits of virtue, although they may not be fruits worthy of penance, should be sought by the penitent. The underlying principle is not how much is offered, but with what state of mind, with how much love does the penitent offer what he is able.¹⁷⁷

Peter Lombard foresees the possibility of a priest, through ignorance or negligence, assigning satisfaction which is not condign. In such a case, even though the penitent would fulfill the penance assigned, he should be compared in some sense to those who do penance only at the end of life or who fail to complete their penance during life. The general principle is: if the penitent's contrition together with the penance assigned by the priest is sufficient for the punishment of his sins, he is freed and will pass from this life to the next without further punishment; but if his sorrow plus the assigned satisfaction is not sufficient, God will complete the punishment in purgatory.¹⁷⁸

Peter held that interior penance or contrition is sometimes sufficient for complete satisfaction. It follows that contrition, according as it is greater or less, will have a greater or lesser value as punishment of the sin. Peter bewails the fact, therefore, that confessors are not able to weigh accurately the depth of con-

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ Dist. XVII, cap. 5, n. 177, p. 857.

¹⁷⁷ Dist. XVI, cap. 2, n. 160, pp. 841-842.

¹⁷⁸ Dist. XX, cap. 3, n. 206, p. 876; cf. cap. 1-2, nn. 201-206, pp. 872-876.

trition which should affect the amount of penance they assign. It is because they cannot weigh contrition that laws or norms of penance are set down for all sinners.

But because the dispensers of the Church, to whom it is not given to understand the secrets of hearts, do not weigh the quantity of contrition, they determine laws of penance for all those sorrowing, whether in a greater or lesser degree, for their sin. Their zeal should aim especially toward this end, that they may perceive sorrow of heart as far as it is permitted to them, and according to its measure, that they may enjoy satisfaction.¹⁷⁹

Besides the depth of contrition, the state or condition of the penitent should be considered by the priest in assigning penance. This influence is suggested where Peter describes true satisfaction and the discretion needed in the penitent for a complete confession. Among some of the circumstances which must be confessed and then considered are the excellence of the office or position of the sinner, his age, wisdom, and rank.¹⁸⁰ And as Pope Leo advises, the priest should consider the devotion of the converted soul, advanced age, and all sorts of dangers and necessities of illness which may affect the penitent.¹⁸¹

The above principle has its most evident application in the case of the dying. A priest called to attend to a dying person should hear that person's confession but should not enjoin satisfaction. He should make known the satisfaction which is due and which would otherwise be assigned, in order that the friends of the dying person may lighten the burden of punishment awaiting him by their prayers and alms; in case of recovery, however, the penitent himself should diligently perform the satisfaction.¹⁸²

As if to exemplify proportioned satisfaction, Peter states that

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*: "Sed quia dispensatores Ecclesiae contritionis quantitatem non perpendunt, quibus non est datum intelligere occulta cordium, omnibus leges poenitentiae constituunt, tam magis quam minus de peccato dolentibus. Quorum studium ad hoc praecipue tendere debet, ut cordis dolorem, quantum

¹⁸⁰ Dist. XVI, cap. 2, n. 160, p. 840.

¹⁸¹ Dist. XX, cap. 4, n. 208, p. 878.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, n. 207, p. 877.

the Lord's Prayer, with some fasting and almsgiving, suffices for venial sins, provided that slight contrition has preceded and that confession be made if there is opportunity; the same three works are to be applied in making satisfaction for grievous sins, but more vehemently and more strictly.¹⁸³

There is no extensive mention of the medicinal aspect of satisfaction. Its basic principle is present, however, in Peter's repeated insistence on correction of life. Moreover, he states that the safer and more perfect practice in confessing both mortal and venial sins is to reveal them to the priests, and to "seek the prescription of medicine from them."¹⁸⁴

PETER OF POITIERS (+1205)

Peter of Poitiers¹⁸⁵ may be considered in his work as a continuator of the teaching of the Master of the Sentences. He was born on an unknown date in the ancient French Province of Poitou, the capital of which was Poitiers. He was certainly a disciple of Peter Lombard in Paris. There he succeeded Peter Comestor to the chair of theology in 1169. In 1193 he was appointed Chancellor of the Chapter of Notre Dame. Peter most probably relinquished his chair of theology when he was named chancellor.¹⁸⁶ Yet it seems that he continued to teach until his death on September 3, 1205.

In the writings of Peter of Poitiers some progress is noted in the manner in which he united faith and dialectics. The basis for his teaching was drawn from the Sacred Scriptures and the Fathers; the expression of his arguments and explanations from Aristotelian philosophy.

There is, however, a notable indecision in Peter's work concerning the exact place of the sacrament of Penance. He merely makes mention of it in Book Five of his *Sentences* in which he

¹⁸³ Dist. XVI, cap. 6, nn. 163-164, p. 844.

¹⁸⁴ Dist. XVII, cap. 4, n. 172, p. 855.

¹⁸⁵ He must be distinguished from Peter of Poitiers who was a monk at Cluny in the 12th century, and from Peter of Poitiers who was a canon of Saint-Victor at the beginning of the 13th century.

¹⁸⁶ Philip S. Moore, *The Works of Peter of Poitiers* (Notre Dame: Univ. of Notre Dame, 1936), p. 6.

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treats the other sacraments. He places Penance in Book Three, his moral treatise. His conception of the efficacy of the sacrament is not clear; in fact, in a rather confusing passage, he calls oral confession a sacrament of the Old Law, both because it was commanded and practiced under the Old Law and because confession (viewed as distinct and in Peter's opinion) does not effect what it signifies.¹⁸⁷

It has been suggested that Peter of Poitiers in his work was a continuator of the teaching of the Master of the Sentences. This does not mean that he treated questions at greater length than Peter Lombard. His work is rather a résumé of his own lectures, a résumé inspired by the example of Peter Lombard.¹⁸⁸ On the other hand Peter of Poitiers does have clearer statements on some points than did his professor.

NATURE OF SATISFACTION

In Peter's teaching it should be noted that the meaning of satisfaction is not one. At one time, he designates contrition, confession, and satisfactory works by the single all-inclusive name of satisfaction.¹⁸⁹ In other cases, he seems to understand satisfaction in the technical and limited sense as one of the penitent's acts in the sacrament.

Peter of Poitiers does not define satisfaction; he does refer to it as the means by which the temporal punishment due to already remitted sin is taken away. As mentioned above, satisfaction in the wide sense includes contrition, confession, and satisfactory works:

... for three things demand attention (*attenduntur*) in satisfaction, namely, contrition of heart, confession of the mouth, performance of the work, just as sin is committed in three ways, by thinking, by speaking, by acting.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ *Sententiarum Libri V*, Lib. III, cap. 13 (PL 211, 1070 C-1071 B).
¹⁸⁸ N. Jung, "Pierre de Poitiers," *DTC*, XII, 2 (1934), 2039.
¹⁸⁹ *Sententiarum Libri V*, Lib. III, cap. 16 (PL 211, 1078 B-C); cap. 12 (PL 211, 1066 C-D).
¹⁹⁰ Lib. III, cap. 12 (PL 211, 1066 C).

Here Peter lists the performance of satisfactory works as the third part of total satisfaction. That would apparently correspond to what is now called sacramental satisfaction. It will be clear later that satisfaction in the strict sense is taken to be the fulfillment of the work assigned by the priest.

SATISFACTORY WORKS

The works through which exterior satisfaction may be made to God are prayer, almsgiving, fasting, and mortification of the flesh and other like works.¹⁹¹

EFFECT OF SATISFACTION

The effect of satisfaction is the payment in this life of the temporal punishment due to sin. And the inadequacy of the satisfaction assigned and fulfilled to pay the debt will result in further punishment in purgatory after this life. Whatever is wanting in satisfaction here will be supplied in punishment there. It is therefore a better thing for the penitent to abound in satisfaction than to be less zealous in its performance.¹⁹²

NECESSITY OF SATISFACTION

The primary reason for the necessity of satisfaction is that man, by mortal sin, offends God. If he would restore himself to a place in God's favor, he must seek to remove the bonds of guilt and punishment by which he is held as a result of his sin. To really satisfy, the sinner must excite deep sorrow and repent of his sin in order to be absolved both of guilt and of punishment in the sight of God.¹⁹³

Peter teaches that by a mortal sin against his neighbor, man offends three persons: God, the Church, his fellow man. Hence besides the satisfaction due to God, the sinner must also remove the bond of satisfaction owed to the Church. This he does by confession of his sin and the performance of temporal punishment.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹ Lib. III, cap. 7 (PL 211, 1057 B); cf. *ibid.* (PL 211, 1056 B); cap. 12 (PL 211, 1066 D).

¹⁹² Lib. III, cap. 16 (PL 211, 1076 B).

¹⁹³ *Ibid.* (PL 211, 1077 A).

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.* The debt of satisfaction owed to one's neighbor does not enter the consideration here.

What Peter means by this debt of satisfaction to the Church is not quite clear. It does not seem to refer to the reparation of scandal or bad example stressed in the Fathers. It may refer to the fact that, supposing as he does the presence of perfect contrition, the guilt of sin is removed by contrition, but the Church, receiving the sinner's confession and assigning penance through her priests, holds a bond of temporal satisfaction.

At any rate, any contrition flowing from charity is sufficient to remove the guilt of mortal sin, not however the temporal punishment due to sin which God alone knows. That is why confessors assign satisfaction, namely, to take away the punishment due to mortal sin. Satisfaction is therefore due to God and must be performed by man as punishment for sin.¹⁹⁵ The root by which man is thus held is the sin he has committed.¹⁹⁶

Admittedly, contrition may be so great that it will suffice for the removal of mortal sin completely, so that neither guilt nor punishment remain. That this is true appears from the case of the Good Thief and of St. Mary Magdalen.¹⁹⁷

Ordinarily contrition will not be sufficiently deep to remove both guilt and punishment, but once the guilt has been taken away, some debt of punishment remains.

That is not, however, a debt of eternal punishment. Indeed, against those who held that the priest absolved the penitent from the debt of eternal damnation, Peter gave clear reply. If they held, as they evidently did, that God personally absolves from the guilt when contrition is elicited, then the absolved penitent was in the possession of charity and consequently worthy of eternal life. In such a condition, no one is at the same time deserving of eternal punishment, and hence he is necessarily already absolved from it.¹⁹⁸ Therefore the debt must be a debt of temporal punishment.

POSSIBILITY OF SATISFACTION

Peter does not expressly teach the possibility of making satisfaction but everywhere assumes that man can do so. Moreover,

¹⁹⁵ Lib. III, cap. 7 (PL 211, 1057 A; cf. 1056 B).

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.* (PL 211, 1056 C).

¹⁹⁷ Lib. III, cap. 8 (PL 211, 1057 C).

¹⁹⁸ Lib. III, cap. 16 (PL 211, 1073 B-C).

he insists on the presence of grace and charity in order that such satisfaction may be made. Some of his predecessors had objected that unless a sinner repented universally of all mortal sins and all venial sins, he would be guilty of the impiety of infidelity in seeking only half-pardon.¹⁹⁹ Hence to obtain the remission of mortal sins, the sinner must also repent of his venial sins.²⁰⁰

To that objection Peter made this answer. The words of Pseudo-Augustine, which gave the foundation for the objection, apply only to mortal sins. A person cannot be forgiven for some mortal crimes unless he is forgiven for all. Hence one cannot have contrition for, nor can he licitly confess only some and not all his mortal sins. What is more to the point here, the fulfillment of satisfaction enjoined in such a case would be of no avail because it would not be worthy (*digna*). Such a person upon full conversion at a later time, would not only be forced to confess the sins admitted in the earlier fraudulent confession, but he would also be compelled to accept and fulfill satisfaction for them.²⁰¹

The objection was also stated in another way. Such a man, having confessed only one of several mortal sins, nevertheless had true penance. For penance consists in weeping over the sins one has committed and in avoiding a repetition of them. But this man wept over the sin he confessed, and both proposed to avoid and actually did avoid its commission.

In response, Peter answers: "It is false, because he did not weep for God's sake, he did not weep with charity."²⁰² This total conversion and consequent presence of charity is not harmed by ignorance of sin, provided that that ignorance is invincible and not a result brought about by sin itself. What is demanded and suffices as a preparation for confession, and hence remotely for true satisfaction, is a sincere examination of conscience.²⁰³

¹⁹⁹ This objection apparently flows from a statement by Pseudo-Augustine, *Liber de vera et falsa poenitentia*, c. 9 (PL 40, 1121).

²⁰⁰ *Sententiarum Libri V*, Lib. III, cap. 6 (PL 211, 1055 A).

²⁰¹ *Ibid.* (PL 211, 1055 B-C).

²⁰² *Ibid.*: "Falsum est, quia non flebat propter Deum, non flebat cum charitate" (PL 211, 1055 D).

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

SACRAMENTAL SATISFACTION

Sacramental satisfaction is assigned by the priest after the confession of sins. For contrition proceeding from charity ordinarily does not remit all the punishment due to sin.

And thence it is that our priests enjoin satisfaction to take away the punishment due to mortal sin, since the guilt has been removed through contrition.²⁰⁴

This satisfaction must be proportioned to the sin. For while a sinner who is guilty of a greater sin is not bound to be more contrite, he is more bound to be contrite, and is especially held to offer greater satisfaction.²⁰⁵

This rule of proportioned satisfaction will be influenced by the depth of contrition. Precisely what is lacking of satisfaction in the wider sense in contrition, is to be supplied through the exterior satisfaction assigned.²⁰⁶

If the priest were to discover that the contrition in the penitent were so great that it would suffice to remove both guilt and punishment, it would not be necessary for him to enjoin any other satisfaction. Yet Peter believes that such knowledge is not had by the priest and, even if it were, that the injunction of satisfaction would still be a good practice. In such a case, if the satisfaction found no punishment to remove, it would still be meritorious.²⁰⁷

It seems to be an accepted principle that the condition of the penitent and his greater or less good-will likewise affect the measure of satisfaction to be imposed.²⁰⁸

PETER CANTOR (+1197)

Most of the points of the life of Peter Cantor remain obscure. His family and his place of birth are uncertain. From the year

²⁰⁴ Lib. III, cap. 7: "Et inde est quod nostri sacerdotes injungunt satisfactionem ad delendum mortale peccatum quantum ad poenam, cum sit deletum quantum ad reatum per contritionem" (PL 211, 1057 A); cf. cap. 16 (PL 211, 1073 C, 1075 C-D, 1076 A-B).

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.* (PL 211, 1056 B).

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.* (PL 211, 1057 B).

²⁰⁸ Lib. III, cap. 16 (PL 211, 1076 C).

1171, however, he was a professor in Paris. In 1184, he became the preceptor of the Bishop's church; from that position he received his surname.

In 1191, he was elected Bishop of Tournai by the clergy of that See, but William of Champagne, Archbishop of Rheims, as metropolitan, opposed his election which he judged as invalid because of an irregularity. Étienne, abbot of Sainte-Geneviève in Paris, intervened in Peter's favor, but in vain. The result was that Étienne himself was proposed as bishop by the metropolitan and accepted by the clergy of Tournai.

On the death of Maurice Sully in 1196, Peter was elected Bishop of Paris by the clergy and the people. But he must have either refused the position or met with opposition from the Archbishop of Rheims. The former is the more probable explanation, because, at the same time, he received a letter from William of Champagne inviting him to come to Rheims as dean of the chapter of the archiepiscopal church.

Peter, after having obtained the consent of the chapter of the Church of Paris, set out for Rheims. On the way, he stopped at the Abbey of Longpont, where he fell gravely ill. While there he took the habit of the religious of Cîteaux. He died on September 22nd, 1197.

The only published work of Peter Cantor is the *Verbum Abbreviatum*. The editor, George Galopin, a Benedictine monk of the monastery of St. Guislain, who published the work in 1639, terms the *Verbum Abbreviatum* a work of moral theology.²⁰⁹ Peter himself states that his purpose is to give a brief and succinct summary of the teaching of Our Lord and to offer to men the pattern of Christ's ways as the route to eternal happiness.²¹⁰

NATURE OF SATISFACTION

One observation should precede the consideration of the teaching of Peter Cantor on satisfaction. He intended to make a summary of the words of Our Lord as recorded in Sacred Scripture. Be it said to his credit that he fulfilled that aim. His work is replete with quotations from which he draws the basis

²⁰⁹ Editor's introduction as reproduced in Migne (PL 205, 22).

²¹⁰ *Verbum Abbreviatum*, cap. 1 (PL 205, 23 A).

tion is one of the reasons for accelerating penance and not waiting until late in life.²¹³

It may be worth noting that Peter seems to envision only the satisfactory value of satisfaction. Speaking of the increased value of greater penalties he states that men "by a greater torment do not merit a greater reward, but more rapid liberation."²¹⁴ Either he practically denies the possibility of abundant satisfaction, or, in the case of abundant satisfaction, he excludes any additional meritorious value.

NECESSITY OF SATISFACTION

He does state the necessity of satisfaction as a part of Penance. "For the sufficiency, perfection, and integrity of Penance, four things are necessary, namely, the infusion of grace, contrition of heart, confession of the mouth, worthy (*digna*) satisfaction of deed (*operis*)." ²¹⁵ Peter illustrates the necessity of these four parts with various citations from Sacred Scripture, especially from the Fiftieth Psalm, the *Miserere*.²¹⁶

The general principle is that sin cannot remain unpunished; either man punishes it himself, or God will punish it. If man punishes his sin, he does so by temporal punishment. If God punishes sin, He does so in the fire of purgatory after this life.²¹⁷

Peter demonstrates that this punishment remains due even after the forgiveness of God has been obtained. Toward this end he introduces the example of David. Speaking of the part played by denial of food and austerity of dress in the labor of penance, Peter shows that David applied such abstinence out of sorrow for his sin. As a result, he heard the desired word of pardon from God through Nathan. And yet David was further punished and he suffered persecution "on account of the remains of sin, not of the guilt, I say, but of the punishment."²¹⁸

Because God will punish sin if man does not do so himself,

²¹³ *Ibid.*, cap. 149 (PL 205, 358 A).

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, cap. 146 (PL 205, 350 D).

²¹⁵ *Verbum Abbreviatum*, cap. 141 (PL 205, 339 A).

²¹⁶ *Ibid.* (PL 205, 339 B-C).

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, cap. 146 (PL 205, 350 D); cf. cap. 149 (PL 205, 358 A).

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, cap. 145 (PL 205, 348 D-349 A).

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for his doctrine. He does not, however, offer an orderly treatment of the subject matter. As will appear in the following examination, his doctrine on satisfaction is gathered from several chapters of his work.

Peter Cantor does not define satisfaction. But, from what he teaches about it, satisfaction appears in general to be a punishment for sin. This is to be understood as a temporal punishment in this life as opposed to the flames of hell or pains of purgatory to be inflicted in the future life.

SATISFACTORY WORKS

Among the satisfactory works by which this important goal may be reached are: all good works, mortification of the flesh, almsgiving, and prayer. Finally, confession, through which the antidote to sin is obtained from the confessor, is also a very important part of satisfaction.²¹¹

EFFECT OF SATISFACTION

The effect of satisfaction is the remission of temporal punishment due to sin. This punishment, in so far as it is not fulfilled by man himself, will be visited upon man in purgatory. That is why the quantity and painfulness of satisfaction must compare with the purgatorial fire:

... for either God punishes, or man. If God, in purgatorial fire, the lightest punishment of which is more grave and painful than the most admirable torments of all the martyrs. If man, by temporal punishment, which must compare with the purgatorial punishment, which capability of man.²¹²

Further strength is accorded this teaching by the fact that Peter repeats elsewhere, in a negative way, that man can avoid and should avoid purgatory. The danger of failing in that obliga-

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, cap. 143 (PL 205, 342 D).

²¹² *Ibid.*, cap. 146: "... aut enim

igne purgatorio, cuius levisissima poena gravior et acerbior est, quam omnium martyrum exquisitissima tormenta. Si homo, temporalis poena, quae acquipollere debet purgatorio pro posse hominis. . . ." (PL 205, 350 D).

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satisfaction is very necessary. This is especially true because of the exceeding pain of the punishments of purgatory, which are far more grievous than all the punishments of the martyrs on earth.²¹⁹ Hence Peter urges man to raise himself from the abyss of vice through penance.

Therefore, in order that you may be lifted up from the abyss of vices, stir yourself through sorrow, cry out through dread of hell, weep through piety, "Have mercy on your soul, pleasing God:" call out through confession, prayer, and holy operation. . . .²²⁰

He exhorts man to compensate for past sinful delights through austerity of life.²²¹

POSSIBILITY OF SATISFACTION

Man is able to make satisfaction to God. Peter does not yet offer a definite treatment of the possibility, but he assumes it as a fact. In offering advice to confessors on their office in the confessional, Peter states that the priest may address the penitent in these words:

You confess to God alone, whose vicar I am, so that neither by word, nod, or sign am I able to disclose those things revealed to Him. You who confess to me, I am bound to you in spiritual fatherhood, in order that I may bear your sins just as those of a son, that I may grieve for them, that with you I may satisfy for them. Be confident therefore, and do penance, [and] I will assure you that if you will execute my advice, and I vow myself a surety on this matter, that you will be completely freed.²²²

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, cap. 146 (PL 205, 350 D); cf. cap. 149 (PL 205, 358 A).
²²⁰ *Ibid.*, cap. 142: "Ergo, ut de abyssu vitorum susciteris, turba te ipsum per dolorem, infreme per gehemae horrorem, lacrymare per pietatem, orationem et sanctam operationem. . . ." (PL 205, 349 A).

²²¹ *Ibid.*, cap. 145 (PL 205, 349 A).
²²² *Verbum Abbreviatum*, cap. 65: "Soli Deo confiteris, cuius ego sum vicarius, ut nec verbo, nutu, vel signo ei revelata possim detegere. Qui mihi confiteris, tibi obligor in paternitate spirituali, ut peccata tua, sicut et filii supportem, pro illis doleam, et tecum pro illis satisfaciam. Confide

His last statement, "completely freed," would certainly indicate a fulfillment of the temporal punishment. Otherwise a penitent could not be said to be completely freed. Yet Peter gives no other indication that these words are to be understood in the fullest sense. That does not destroy their effectiveness, however, since in any case his statement would seem to indicate that the penitent is able to fulfill his obligation of satisfaction.

Peter Cantor teaches that worthy satisfaction (*digna satisfactio*) is a part of Penance. He does not yet offer any of the technical distinctions between the various degrees of satisfaction which man can offer. There is one indication, however, that Peter recognizes that man, whatever be the degree of satisfaction he offers, cannot offer recompense which is perfect in the fullest sense. He seems to teach that the only worthy recompense comes from Christ. For after urging the sinner to be reconciled and restored to the Lord, he adds,

. . . you may say: "What shall I render to the Lord for all the things that He hath rendered to me? I will take the chalice of salvation, and I will call upon the name of the Lord." For the only worthy recompense comes from Him Who has not sinned, since blood is atoned for by blood, to Whom we owe everything, that "we live and move and have our being."²²³

The meaning seems to be that the sinner should call upon the name of the Lord through Whom alone he can offer satisfaction, because only Christ was able to offer strict recompense for sin. Yet earlier Peter had warned the sinner to offer "condign and fruitful penance" for his sins.²²⁴ Admitting the fact that terminology was not yet fixed, Peter seems to vision a difference

ergo, et age poenitentiam, quod si consilium meum egeris, promittoque me super hoc fideiorem, dabo, quod ex toto liberaberis" (PL 205, 199 A).
²²³ *Ibid.*, cap. 145: "Imo, primo reconciliare ei, et te ipsum ablatum restituere, post, reconciliatione et restitutione facta, dicas: 'Quid retribuam Domino pro omnibus quae retribuit mihi? Calicem salutaris accipiam, et nomen Domini invocabo.' Sola enim digna recompensatio est ab eo etiam qui nihil peccavit, cum sanguis sanguine recompensatur, cui debemus omne, quod 'vivimus, movemur et sumus (Act. 17)'" (PL 205, 349 B-C).
²²⁴ *Ibid.*; cf. cap. 141 (PL 205, 339); cap. 145 (PL 205, 348 B).

between man's worthy or condign satisfaction, and that recompense which is worthy in the most complete sense.

CONDITIONS

Peter Cantor also lists certain conditions for the performance of satisfaction. Indeed all the conditions known in later theologians might be drawn from his doctrine, but we shall limit the consideration to those he mentions explicitly. Even those which he does mention explicitly are not in an orderly fashion arrayed in relation to satisfaction.

On man's part Peter would require the conditions of temporal life and the state of grace. For he urges the sinner, "Perform condign and fruitful penance while you live."²²⁵ Moreover, he devotes an entire chapter to a consideration of the brevity of life, which must be a spur to performing penance. For in these few days of life on earth, man must prepare adequately for eternity.²²⁶ In listing those four things which pertain to the perfection of Penance, Peter lists the infusion of grace first. He then continues, having named contrition, confession, and satisfaction as the other parts:

These three without the first are insufficient. For without avail do we sorrow, do we confess, do we offer satisfaction, and are we afflicted by the labor of punishment, without the infusion of grace, without faith operating through love. Therefore, believe, hope, and love, in order that you may sorrow, confess, labor with profit.²²⁷

These words speak for themselves. And were they not sufficient, Peter seems to insinuate the necessity of the state of grace in another statement. For he teaches that the priest must sometimes give a sharp punishment to penitents who refuse to restore what they have taken away. In such a case the priest should refuse to enjoin satisfaction. The purpose of this denial is to bring

²²⁵ *Ibid.*

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, cap. 147 (PL 205, 351 C-355 A); cf. cap. 146 (PL 205, 351 B).

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, cap. 141: "Tria sine primo insufficientia sunt. Inutiliter enim conterimur, confitemur, satisfacimus, et labore poenae affigimur, sine infusione gratiae, sine fide operante per dilectionem. Credas igitur, speres, et diligas, ut utiliter conteraris, confitearis, opereris" (PL 205, 339 A-B).

the penitent to true penance and compunction.²²⁸ Thus he seems to make the state of grace and charity a necessary prelude to satisfaction. He states explicitly elsewhere that the first steps in penance are reconciliation and restitution.²²⁹

Peter Cantor would seem to demand that the works of satisfaction be freely performed or accepted, and that they be penal in character. In regard to voluntariety, he points out that "one waiting up to the day of death to repent rarely has true penance. For then rather sins put him off, than he puts off sins."²³⁰ Besides, Peter urges penitents to perform works of satisfaction which could only be performed at the command of the will.

The need of a penal aspect in satisfaction arises from the very reason for making satisfaction, namely, to perform the temporal punishment due to sin. The principle mentioned earlier applies once again: either man punishes his sin or God will punish it. Peter further holds that the punishment in either case will be a torment (*cruciatas*). The penal aspect is so important that Peter points out that, supposing equal charity, the greater the penalty which is carried, the more rapid will be the remission of the debt of temporal punishment.

In like manner, how great penance ought to be is clear from the fact that a greater and more painful torment, indeed in equal charity, brings more rapid absolution in purgatory; therefore also in penance which must compare with it [purgatory]. Consequently he does less penance who is less tormented, even though he has equal charity. He indeed who is more tormented is more quickly freed from the punishment of sin. . . .²³¹

SACRAMENTAL SATISFACTION

Satisfaction is to be imposed by the priest. Peter lists the imposition of satisfaction as one of the four means placed in the

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, cap. 144 (PL 205, 344 C).

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, cap. 145 (PL 205, 349 B).

²³⁰ *Ibid.*: "Expectans poenitere usque ad diem mortis, raro vere poenitet. Tunc enim potius peccata eum dimittunt, quam ipse peccata" (PL 205, 349 B).

²³¹ *Ibid.*, cap. 146 (PL 205, 350 D-351 A).

hands of the prelate (priest) to root out sins.²³² Moreover the priest must impose this satisfaction in quality and quantity corresponding to the quality and quantity of the fault. Only where the fruits of penance or satisfaction correspond to the guilt does man escape the wrath to come.²³³ "For the fruit of penance or of good work is not the same for him who has sinned not at all or only slightly as it is for him who has sinned doing evil or more seriously."²³⁴

Moreover, in order to erase the debt of temporal punishment in this life, the quantity and painfulness of satisfaction must compare (*aequipollere*) with the fires of purgatory in which God would otherwise punish man. The condition of the penitent, however, will affect this proportion of satisfaction to the pains otherwise awaiting man in purgatorial fire. Peter states that such proportion will be attained "if [man] has enkindled the fire of penance's tribulation and painfulness according to his powers." If man has not done so, he will neither have punished himself sufficiently nor have repented sincerely. In the light of what he has taught, Peter concludes that few truly repent.²³⁵

Satisfaction should likewise be accommodated to the kind of sin. The priest is a doctor as well as a judge; hence he must cure as well as purge.²³⁶ The same rule that is met in other theologians appears here: vices are cured by opposite satisfaction. As Peter advises:

Against the softness and past pleasures of the flesh, sleep in sack-cloth; cure excess sleep by many watchings; free yourself from gluttony by fasting, dry up drunkenness with thirst, and thus cure contraries by their opposites. . . .²³⁷

²³² *Verbum Abbreviatum*, cap. 65 (PL 205, 198 D).

²³³ *Ibid.*, cap. 145 (PL 205, 348 B).

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, cap. 141: "Non enim poenitentiae vel fructus boni operis est ei qui nihil vel parum peccavit, sicut ei qui malum vel plus peccavit" (PL 205, 339 D).

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, cap. 146 (PL 205, 350 D, 351 B).

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, cap. 144 (PL 205, 344 B).

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, cap. 146: "Contra mollietatem et delicias carnis praeteritas, dormias in sacco; somnos nimios vigiliis multis cures; gastrimargiam jejuniis relevas, ebrietatem siti arefacias, sicque contrarius contraria cures. . . ." (PL 205, 351 A).

That satisfaction is thus both penal and medicinal follows. Indeed "penance has two hands: penitential labor to take away past sins; castigation of the flesh to avoid future sins."²³⁸

ALAIN DE LILLE (ca. 1120-1203)

If legend is omitted and only historical data allowed, very little is known about the life of Alain de Lille.²³⁹ He was born at Lille, probably about 1120. He taught with great success at Paris and also at Montpellier. He died at Cîteaux as a monk in 1202 or 1203.²⁴⁰

Alain's most important theological work is his *Tractatus Contra Haereticos*, in four books. The greater part of his teaching on Penance, however, is contained in three other compositions: the *Liber Poenitentialis*; the opusculum *De Sex Alis Cherubim*, which has often been ascribed to Saint Bonaventure; and the *Summa De Arte Praedicatoria*.

NATURE OF SATISFACTION

Alain of Lille seems to be occupied for the most part in stressing the need of making satisfaction which is proportionate to the crime, but he at least touches several of the other fundamentals. He likewise seems to deal exclusively with sacramental satisfaction, although there is one passage which will be cited later in which he mentions satisfaction independent of the sacrament. There is, however, no definite distinction made between the two.

Alain does offer a very useful distinction between interior and exterior penance.²⁴¹ Interior penance is contrition of heart, by which a person weeps over his crimes, with a will never to repeat their commission. Exterior penance is satisfaction which accompanies repentance. It is called *penance* because it has a quasi hold on man (*quasi poena tenens hominem*) through punishment.

Alain defines satisfaction as "the expiatory performance of enjoined penance or the condign punishment and correction of

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, cap. 81 (PL 205, 250 A).

²³⁹ Among the various usages accorded his name: Alain of Lille, Alain de l'Isle, Alanus ab Insulis, Alanus de Insulis.

²⁴⁰ Cf. M. Jacquin, "Alain de Lille," *DHGE*, I (1912), 1299-1304.

²⁴¹ *Liber Poenitentialis* (PL 210, 295 B).

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sins."²⁴² This satisfaction is one of the three parts of the sacrament of Penance. More precisely, the author's description of the place and function of satisfaction in the sacrament lends clarity to his definition.

Satisfaction follows confession. Compunction creates and forms these first two wings. For in every action of penance, these three are proved to be necessary, compunction, confession, satisfaction. Compunction, however, stirs up, confession accuses, satisfaction strengthens; compunction searches out the occasion of the disease, confession manifests it, satisfaction cures it. Compunction enumerates the evils, confession condemns, satisfaction corrects. Compunction punctures the ulcer, confession forces out the pus, satisfaction applies the poultice. Compunction finds the wound, confession lays it open, satisfaction restores health.²⁴³

Penance is had when the sinner rejects and condemns his evil acts, but only when satisfaction follows, as a punishment and correction of those evil acts, are the fruits of penance produced.²⁴⁴

SATISFACTORY WORKS

Among the works which accompany true penance are the feathers of the wing of satisfaction: the renunciation of sin, the pouring out of tears, the mortification of the flesh, the giving of alms, the devotion of prayer.²⁴⁵ Included, then, are the three

²⁴² *De Sex Alis Cherubim*, Ala Secunda (PL 210, 275 D).
²⁴³ *Ibid.*: "Confessionem sequitur satisfactio. Has duas primas alas creat format compunctio. In omni enim actore poenitentiae, haec tria necessaria esse comprobantur, compunctio, confessio, satisfactio. Compunctio occasionem investigat, confessio manifestat, satisfactio confortat; compunctio morbi mala enumerat, confessio condemnat, satisfactio curat. Compunctio apostema pungit, confessio santhem exprimit, satisfactio emendat. Compunctio Compunctio vulnus invenit, confessio aperit, satisfactio sanitatem apponit (PL 210, 274 C). Alain also enumerates satisfaction as a part of Penance in the following: *Summa de Arte Praedicatoria*, cap. 31 (PL 210, 173 D); *Tractatus Contra Haereticos*, Libri Quatuor, Lib. I, c. 54 (PL 210, 358 A); *Liber Poenitentialis* (PL 210, 289 D).
²⁴⁴ *Ibid.* (PL 210, 275 D).
²⁴⁵ *Ibid.* (PL 210, 276 B, D); cf. *Liber Poenitentialis* (PL 210, 301 B; 291 C-D); *Summa de Arte Praedicatoria*, c. 32 (PL 210, 174 A).

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major classes of satisfactory works known today, though Alain does not give them distinctive listing as types.

EFFECT OF SATISFACTION

The effect of satisfaction is the avoidance of the fires of purgatory and hell otherwise due after this life. But principally the payment of the punishment, which would be exacted after this life in purgatory, is achieved through satisfaction in the present.²⁴⁶ Another effect is insinuated in this, that one of the reasons for satisfaction is that the flesh, which gave rise to growth of vice previously, may be brought through penance to promote the increase of virtues.²⁴⁷

NECESSITY OF SATISFACTION

Satisfaction is necessary because it was commanded by Christ, from Whom it received its beginning.

Exterior penance had its beginning from Christ through preaching, from Job an example through satisfaction, from David through teaching and instruction.²⁴⁸

Its value is likewise demonstrated by the preaching of St. John the Baptist and by the examples of Achab and the Ninivites.²⁴⁹ Satisfaction is no less necessary by reason of the punishment which is due to sins. Indeed, while contrition at times may be sufficient to remove completely both guilt and punishment, ordinarily it is not. Some punishment must be undergone, and satisfaction is ordained to fulfil that need.²⁵⁰

Indeed the priest is advised to warn the penitent of the magnitude of his sins and of the great punishments which would befall him were he to die in those sins. On the other hand, the priest should encourage the sinner by pointing out that he

²⁴⁶ *Summa de Arte Praedicatoria*, c. 32 (PL 210, 174 D-175 A).

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.* (PL 210, 174 C).

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*: "Exterior poenitentia a Christo habuit exordium per praedicationem, a Job exemplum per satisfactionem, a David per magisterium et instructionem. . . ." (PL 210, 174 A).

²⁴⁹ *Liber Poenitentialis* (PL 210, 301 B, C).

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.* (PL 210, 290 D).

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can be freed from those punishments by suffering now through penance.²⁵¹

Alain comes very close to stating the principle in later theological terminology when he asserts:

One must be placed in this purgatorial fire in the present, that he may not be tortured finally in the flame of hell.²⁵²

It would seem at first glance that Alain limits the choice of the sinner to punishment on earth or eternal punishment. His own particular explanation which follows, however, shows that Alain held the traditional doctrine. Satisfaction in the present life remits the debt of temporal punishment otherwise exacted in purgatory after this present life. He implies that neglect of satisfaction in this life is gravely culpable and therefore leads to hell.

Immediately after the statement quoted above, Alain continues: "There is a three-fold fire, purgatorial, probatory, peremptory; the purgatorial is satisfaction, the probatory is trial (*tentatio*), the peremptory is eternal damnation." The sinner who pays his debt in the purgatorial fire is freed from the probatory and peremptory fires. In Alain's words: "If we are purged in the first, we are freed in the second and the third. If we do not experience the first, we shall feel the second, nay more (which is more grievous!) the peremptory."²⁵³

The purgatorial fire includes both satisfaction in the present life and purgatory after this life. "Moreover the purgatorial fire is two-fold, one during life, namely penance, the other after life, namely purgatorial punishment." As noted above, Alain calls both purgatorial fires by the single name of satisfaction. He concludes that satisfaction in the present life prevents the suffering of purgatorial punishment and, what is more, of eternal punishment. "The first purgatorial fire excludes two other fires, namely the second purgatorial fire and the eternal peremptory fire."²⁵⁴

²⁵¹ *Ibid.* (PL 210, 289 C).

²⁵² *Summa de Arte Prædicatoria*, cap. 32: "In hoc igne purgatorio debet constitui in præsentia, ne crucietur peremptorie in flamma gehennali." (PL 210, 174 D).

²⁵³ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

Therefore satisfaction in the present life is necessary to avoid the punishments of purgatory in the next life. Alain notes that satisfaction is a sort of "shadow and picture" of purgatory. He adds his reasons for this statement:

... because just as the shadow and picture of material fire inflicts no bodily pain, but material fire itself inflicts torture or flame: thus the fire of penance has nothing of bitterness in comparison with the second purgatorial fire. Because, as Augustine says, the punishment of purgatory is much more grave than any temporal punishment.²⁵⁵

Such disproportion should move the sinner to accept the invitation to penance which God offers in His mercy.

The necessity of satisfaction is so great that man should be certain to perform it even extra-sacramentally. In this one passage Alain states that the sinner must, of his own volition, continue to redeem his sins by almsgiving, fasting, watching, and prayers, even when the priest fails to impose penance on him, no matter whether that omission proceeds from a lack of discretion, a sort of natural piety, or a conjecture of superabundant contrition in the penitent.²⁵⁶

POSSIBILITY OF SATISFACTION

Concerning the possibility of making satisfaction, Alain seems to content himself with the mere statement that man is able to satisfy.²⁵⁷ He likewise teaches that it is impossible for a man to make satisfaction for one sin while he remains in other crimes, thus insinuating, at least, the prerequisite of the state of grace for the performance of true satisfaction.²⁵⁸ Finally, while a sinner cannot satisfy for one mortal sin while unrepentant for others, he nevertheless can obtain from God the more rapid conversion of heart.²⁵⁹ Here is the germ of the supernatural character of satisfaction in so far as it must proceed under the help of grace.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁶ *Liber Poenitentialis* (PL 210, 301 B).

²⁵⁷ *De Sex Alis Cherubim, Ala Secunda* (PL 210, 276 A).

²⁵⁸ *Liber Poenitentialis* (PL 210, 303 B).

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

SACRAMENTAL SATISFACTION

With the one exception mentioned earlier, Alain seems to envision satisfaction exclusively as sacramental. Therefore his repeated insistence rests on the fact that the assignment of satisfaction is made by the priest. Thus the sinner is urged to offer perfect obedience to the priest who enjoins satisfaction.²⁶⁰ Moreover the need of receiving the injunction of satisfaction from the priest was at least a partial reason for the institution of the obligation of making a full confession of sins to the priest. Unless the priest knows the sins, he cannot enjoin satisfaction as a cure for them.²⁶¹ Moreover, while there are definite penances still prescribed for certain sins, it belongs to the priest to fix a reasonable manner of penance.²⁶²

The sinner must not only repent and bring forth the fruits of penance in satisfaction, but he must bring forth worthy fruits.²⁶³ More specifically, through penance he must offer of himself as many holocausts of satisfaction, as he had offered of himself vices to the devil.²⁶⁴

Hence the priest is ordinarily obliged to enjoin satisfaction. If the penitent seems to have a sufficient spirit of repentance, the confessor should assign satisfaction according to the state of the sin. Sometimes contrition will be so abundant that it will remove the necessity of additional satisfaction, because it takes away completely both guilt and punishment. Yet even in such cases, the omission of the injunction should be rare because of the danger of relapse into sins for which no punishment was given.²⁶⁵ The general rule to be followed by the priest is that ordinarily he should assign satisfaction to every penitent, even the deeply contrite, unless the signs of immense contrition are exteriorly manifest.²⁶⁶ Further, he should assign that satisfaction according to the quantity and quality of the sins.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁰ *Sermo III, De Timore Iudicii*, in *Quadragesima* (PL 210, 206 B).

²⁶¹ *Tractatus Contra Haereticos*, Lib. I, c. 56 (PL 210, 359 A).

²⁶² *Liber Poenitentialis* (PL 210, 297 D-298 A).

²⁶³ *De Sex Alis Cherubim* (PL 210, 276 A).

²⁶⁴ *Summa de Arte Praedicatoria*, c. 32 (PL 210, 174 C).

²⁶⁵ *Liber Poenitentialis* (PL 210, 290 C-D).

²⁶⁷ *De Sex Alis Cherubim* (PL 210, 275 D).

Just as medicine is given to a patient according to the quantity of the disease and yet is moderated according to the strength of the patient, so also according to the quantity of the sin satisfaction is measured, but further decreased or increased according to the weakness or capability of the penitent. Besides, the degree of contrition must be considered.²⁶⁸

The priest must consider the state of the person upon whom satisfaction is to be enjoined. Some penitents are strong enough to endure the austerity of fasting or the strain of watching. Others, physically less prepared, should rather be given penances of prayer and almsgiving, pilgrimages and good works. And this variation of the satisfaction still fulfills the notion of true penance because God does not regard how much is given, but from how much love it is given.²⁶⁹

The priest is also a spiritual physician, and therefore should aim to give, not merely proportioned punishment in satisfaction, but also to enjoin penances which will have a medicinal or curative character. Thus he must endeavor to heal the spiritual evils by assigning as satisfaction penances contrary to them. Such a goal involves the consideration of the quality or kind of the sin. One guilty of intoxication would be given sound medicine in the injunction of fasting as a penance.²⁷⁰

In summation, for lesser sins a lighter satisfaction is required, and for greater sins a greater satisfaction.²⁷¹ This rule may be influenced by the depth of contrition, the state of the penitent, and the kind of sins.

Following earlier leads, Alain declares that venial sins are remitted through daily prayer.²⁷²

In caring for those who are ill, the priest ought not to assign satisfaction, but rather to make it known in order that the sick penitent may fulfill it should God give him additional time of life. But as a sort of quasi-satisfaction, the priest should urge

²⁶⁸ *Liber Poenitentialis* (PL 210, 291 A).

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.* (PL 210, 291 C-D).

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.* (PL 210, 291 D-292 A; 289 C); cf. *Summa de Arte Praedicatoria*, c. 32 (PL 210, 174 B, C); *De Sex Alis Cherubim* (PL 210, 275 D).

²⁷¹ *Ibid.* (PL 210, 301 C).

²⁷² *Ibid.*

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him to bear with patience and devotion the trials sent him by God in his illness.²⁷³

PETER OF BLOIS (ca. 1135-1204)

Peter was born at Blois about 1135 of a noble family. He studied at least some of the courses of letters at Tours. Afterward he was sent to Paris where he may have followed the lectures of John of Salisbury, who taught there from 1140 to 1150.

From Paris Peter went to Bologna to pursue studies in medicine and mathematics. While at Bologna he became known among his fellow students for his eloquence and intellectual gifts. In 1160 or 1161, Peter, while on his way to visit Pope Alexander III, underwent an assault at the hands of the partisans of the anti-pope, Victor IV.

On his return to Paris Peter studied the sacred sciences: philosophy, theology, and Sacred Scripture. In a very few years he became one of the most celebrated theologians of his times.

At the completion of his studies, about 1167, Peter went to Sicily. There he succeeded Gauthier, who had become the Archbishop of Palermo, as tutor to the young king, William II. Peter soon became a power to be recognized in his influence at court. The Sicilians were envious of this power, and while their various schemes to oust him were not the direct cause of his departure, Peter left Sicily in 1169 despite the king's desire to hold him there.

His return to France brought him a brief teaching assignment. But soon, at the request of Henry II, he went to the royal court in England. There he was appointed the Chancellor of Richard, Archbishop of Canterbury. Under Richard he was charged with three missions to Rome, to regulate the affairs of both the archbishop and the king, during the pontificates of Alexander III and Urban III. When Henry II died, Queen Eleanor made Peter her secretary, a post he filled from 1191 to 1195. His influence here again roused new enemies who caused him eventually to lose his title of Archdeacon of Bath.

The Bishop of London, however, promptly appointed him his archdeacon and made him dean of a chapter in the Diocese of
²⁷³ *Ibid.* (PL 210, 296 D).

Chester. The scandalous lives of the canons in the latter post caused Peter to write to Innocent III in 1199, urging that the chapter be given into the hands of the Cistercians.

Peter of Blois died in poverty some time after 1204. Peter was a prolific writer, but many of his works were not preserved. Among those which were preserved no compendium is to be found. He did write short treatises on sacramental confession and on the priest's duty in enjoining satisfaction, but even these contain no complete doctrine on the sacrament of Penance. Nevertheless he is an interesting witness to the theological thought of the times. The fundamentals of the doctrine on Penance, and hence on satisfaction, are to be found succinctly stated in one of his poems—*De Poenitentia*.

NATURE OF SATISFACTION

Satisfaction is part of the means by which sins are completely purged. Hence Peter of Blois warns the sinner to repent and to note carefully the five necessary parts of that process: "Hope of pardon, contrite heart, confession of guilt, punishment of satisfaction, and the fleeing of evil."²⁷⁴

SATISFACTORY WORKS

The works by which the fulfillment of satisfaction may be made are the fruits of penance. Among these are watching, fasting, discipline, and the mortification of the flesh.²⁷⁵

EFFECT OF SATISFACTION

The effect of satisfaction is the remission of temporal punishment, which would otherwise be suffered in purgatory. "For what you will not have purged out in the present, God will purge in the fire of purgatory."²⁷⁶

NECESSITY OF SATISFACTION

This satisfaction, as Peter states, is a punishment of sin. Punishment will be visited either by man himself through satis-

²⁷⁴ *Poenata, IV De Poenitentia* (PL 207, 1153 C).

²⁷⁵ *Liber de Confessione Sacramentali* (PL 207, 1086 B).

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

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faction or by God through the fire of purgatory.²⁷⁷ The necessity of satisfaction flows from this fact of the punishment of sin; hence Peter's urging to be "solicitous to fulfill the satisfactory punishment."²⁷⁸ This is evidently not eternal punishment, for Peter insinuates that it is one which may be forgiven in contrite reconciliation with God, though it is not necessarily forgiven. In exhorting confessors to receive penitents with mercy, he states: "How do you know if he is already cleansed by tears and contrition? Perhaps he was freed by the very resolve to confess."²⁷⁹

POSSIBILITY OF SATISFACTION

Man can make satisfaction because it is a part of Penance. The purgation of sins in general was made possible because Christ mercifully assigned to man as means, "contrition of heart, confession of mouth, affliction of the flesh."²⁸⁰ Moreover, the Judge receiving these acts is merciful.²⁸¹

CONDITIONS

Peter seems to indicate the need of the state of grace for the performance of satisfaction when he points out that confession, which must precede satisfaction, should include all mortal sins committed.²⁸² The condition of temporal life may well be contained in his advice to the sinner, "Repent quickly."²⁸³ It is more evidently required as he points out that man must purge out sin "in the present."²⁸⁴ The supernatural character of satisfaction would logically follow the statement that even the ability to weep over one's sins is a gift of God's grace.²⁸⁵

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁸ *De Poenitentia* (PL 207, 1155 B).

²⁷⁹ *De Poenitentia vel Satisfactione a Sacerdote Injurgenda* (PL 207, 1097 A).

²⁸⁰ *Liber de Confessione Sacramentali* (PL 207, 1086 B).

²⁸¹ *Ibid.* (PL 207, 1153 C).

²⁸² *Ibid.* (PL 207, 1154 C).

²⁸³ *Ibid.* (PL 207, 1153 C).

²⁸⁴ *Liber de Confessione Sacramentali* (PL 207, 1085 B).

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.* (PL 207, 1087 B).

SACRAMENTAL SATISFACTION

That Peter taught the imposition of satisfaction by the priest is more than evident, since he devoted a special short treatise to that very point. Even elsewhere he states the same doctrine. Implicitly he urges penitents to fulfill the penances enjoined upon them.²⁸⁶ Explicitly he mentions as one of the possible ways by which a priest could be guilty of revealing sins confessed to him the injunction of excessively severe satisfaction.²⁸⁷

In assigning satisfaction, the priest, mindful of his own weakness, should be neither too harsh nor too lenient. Rather he must follow a middle course so that neither excessive remission of punishment be supposed nor excessive austerity in satisfaction be exercised. This middle course is open to the priest if he follows the penances instituted by the Fathers, and imposes them according to the kind of sin.²⁸⁸

Elsewhere Peter points out that the penance must be proportioned to the guilt. Yet that general principle admits of other influences. Ordinarily, lighter satisfaction should be enjoined where contrition is greater. Besides, the confessor should consider the circumstances of the cause of the sin, the character of the vice, the condition of the person, in order to moderate the penance accordingly.²⁸⁹

The satisfaction enjoined should be proportioned to the kind of sin as well. For just as doctors apply different cures for fever, wound, or tumor, "thus souls demand various medicines." The confessor as spiritual doctor should assign penances contrary to the disease.²⁹⁰

Where the penitent is seriously ill, he should be aided to repent and to confess his sins, but satisfaction should not be imposed on him. Rather it should be intimated in order that the penitent can fulfill it in case of his return to health.²⁹¹

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.* (PL 207, 1085 B).

²⁸⁷ *De Poenitentia vel Satisfactione a Sacerdote Injurgenda* (PL 207, 1092 D).

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.* (PL 207, 1093 C); cf. *De Poenitentia* (PL 207, 1155 B).

²⁸⁹ *De Poenitentia* (PL 207, 1156 A-B).

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.* (PL 207, 1156 A).

²⁹¹ *Ibid.* (PL 207, 1154 D).

THE DOCTRINE OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

In this century the theologians of the great Scholastic period assumed the traditional doctrine of the Church on satisfaction as it was handed to them or taught to them. Their basic text was the work of Peter Lombard upon which they composed commentaries.

It is already evident that the authors of the preceding century taught all the fundamental points of the doctrine. The great Scholastics took those fundamentals, made steps toward a more uniform vocabulary, and elaborated the doctrine with a more intimate scrutiny of the fine points and a more detailed explanation of accepted principles.¹

The doctrine as the thirteenth century authors expounded it was substantially the doctrine later crystallized in the Council of Trent. Even modern theologians have been able to add little to the speculative theology of satisfaction. They have accomplished a better synthesis and have given a more orderly treatment of the questions involved. On the practical side, post-Tridentine theologians have drawn from the fundamental principles conclusions which are an aid in the dealings of the confessor with the penitent.²

Here in the thirteenth century we find the firm foundation for the later perfection of the theology of sacramental satisfaction.

ALEXANDER OF HALES (+1245)

Alexander was born at Hales or Hailles in Gloucestershire, toward the end of the twelfth century, perhaps about 1180. He received his education at the local monastic school and probably also at Oxford. When he had finished his studies in England,

¹ É. Amann, "La Pénitence Privée; son organisation; premières spéculations a son sujet," *DTC*, XII, 1 (1933), 933-934.
² P. Galtier, "Satisfaction," *DTC*, XIV, 1 (1939), 1190.

Alexander went to the University of Paris where he attained the Master's degree, first in Arts and then in Theology.

Roger Bacon is the authority for stating that Alexander was the *Magister regens* in the faculty of Arts in 1210, the first biographical date of which we are certain. From Bacon also we learn that Alexander was an archdeacon, probably because of a benefice he held in England.

By 1220, Alexander was a member of the faculty of Theology. In 1231, he entered the Franciscan Order, continuing, however, to exercise his duties as a teacher of theology. This fact was of great importance to the University of Paris and to the course of studies in the Franciscan Order.

Alexander died at the Franciscan Convent in Paris on August 21, 1245.

The principal work of Alexander of Hales is his *Summa Theologiae* which he began in 1231 and which remained incomplete and unfinished at his death. In 1256 Pope Alexander IV ordered the Provincial of the French Franciscans to call his most learned religious together in order to complete the *Summa*. The direction of that work was given to William of Melitona. The latter labored to compose a *Summa Virtutum* to fill the gap in the Third Part of Alexander's work. The result of William's effort was never wholly inserted in the Master's *Summa*; indeed William died before he was able to finish it.³

Alexander's work was not the first *Summa*.⁴ The various subjects of the sacrament of Pénitence, "Doctrines d'Alexandre d'Alès au sujet du sacrement de Pénitence," *Études Franciscaines*, XXXVII (1925), 337-338.

⁴ The *Summa Theologiae* of Alexander of Hales has been published several times. The Quaracchi editors of the works of St. Bonaventure are publishing a critical edition of Alexander's *Summa*, of which Parts One, Two and Three have appeared. For Part Four we have turned to the Colognè (1622) Edition. For the sake of convenience, all citations from Part Four will be accompanied by both the page and the column number. It should be noted that the Fourth Part of Alexander's *Summa* was interrupted midway in his treatise on Penance. It is impossible, pending publication of Part Four by the Quaracchi editors, to say just which portion is Alexander's own work and which portion is to be ascribed to his continuators. Cf. Fulbert Cayré, *Précis de Patrologie et d'Histoire de la Théologie* (2e éd.; Paris: Desclée, 1931-1933), t. II, p. 488.

collections of Sentences, which preceded his work, were summaries of theology. But the *Summa* of Alexander was the first to make use of the physical, metaphysical, and ethical, as well as the logical treatises of Aristotle. He thus prepared the way for his better known successors for whom Aristotle was "the philosopher."

Alexander was the first of the great thirteenth century Scholastics in point of time. His influence on the leaders who made that century the golden age of Scholasticism was great. St. Thomas, for example, followed Alexander's arrangement and method very closely when he composed his *Summa Theologica*.

NATURE OF SATISFACTION

Satisfaction is an act of the virtue of penance.⁵ By it man makes some return to God for the injustice committed against God through sin.

Alexander of Hales explains the quiddity of satisfaction by commenting upon the "descriptions" of Gennadius and St. Anselm.⁶

Gennadius described satisfaction as the process of rooting out the causes of sin and not giving entrance to their suggestions.⁷ In this he stressed that aspect of satisfaction by which the penitent recedes from evil. St. Anselm taught that to satisfy is to return the honor due to God.⁸ He emphasized the penitent's approach to good or the execution of good.

Alexander believes that the description of Gennadius points to the two essential requirements of satisfaction for committed sins: the exercise in the works of the virtues and the complete exclusion of sin. The first is designated by the words: "to root out the causes of sins," and the second by the adjoined phrase: "and not to give entrance to their suggestions."⁹

The causes of sins are rooted out when the penitent performs virtuous acts in the manner in which they should be performed.

⁵ *Summa Theologiae*, Pars IV, q. 16, m. 1, a. 1 (p. 504, 1-2).
⁶ *Ibid.*, q. 24, m. 3 (p. 643, 2).

⁷ Gennadius, *De Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus*, 54 (PL 58, 994 C).

⁸ Anselmus, *Cur Deus Homo*, Lib. I, II (PL 158, 377 A).
⁹ *Op. cit.*, loc. cit. (p. 646, 1-2).

Entrance is refused to the suggestions of sins when those defects by which good works degenerate into sins are excluded from the actions. Alexander states it as follows:

For entrance to the suggestions of sin is not offered in the instance when all those defects are excluded by which works of the virtues are accustomed to degenerate into sins; on account of which [defects] they are said to be deficient rather than to be caused; and their causes are called deficient and not efficient. For example: if he, who satisfies for sins by fasting, praying, almsgiving, fasts, prays, [and] gives alms in such a way that no defect of sin deforms those acts: such as if they are performed in that manner and with that intention in which they ought to be performed: and all things similarly concur which are required: then the causes of sin are rooted out: and it is fitting satisfaction.¹⁰

* There are, however, other more evident causes of sin which may be called the habitual causes. Satisfaction must root them out also.

Or the causes of sins may be termed habitual, which would bring on sin, unless they were rooted out: for excessive drinking of wine brings on drunkenness, drunkenness impurity: which are to be rooted out by the opposite works of justice.¹¹

Alexander would not favor a view by which the occasions of sin would be designated as the causes of sin which must be rooted out by satisfaction. He views the avoidance of occasions, not

¹⁰ *Ibid.*: "Tunc enim non praebetur aditus suggestionibus peccati: quando omnes illi defectus excluduntur, quibus solent opera virtutum in peccata degenerare: propter quos magis dicuntur deficere, quam causari: et eorum causae dicuntur deficientes, et non efficientes. Verbi gratia: si iste, qui satisfacit pro peccatis, ieiunando, orando, eleemosynam dando: ita ieiunat, orat, eleemosynam dat, quod istos actus nullus defectus deformet peccati: utpote si fiant eo modo et ea intentione, qua fieri debeant: et alia concurrant similiter, quae requiruntur: tunc excluduntur causae peccati: et est conveniens satisfactio."

¹¹ *Ibid.*: "Vel causae peccatorum possunt dici habitualiter, quae peccatum inducunt, nisi exciderentur: nimia enim vini potatio ebrietatem inducit, ebrietas luxuriam: quae sunt excidenda per opera iustitiae contraria."

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as an element constituting satisfaction, but rather as a means of facilitating the performance of satisfactory works.

If, however, one would say that the causes of sins are called occasions: then the expediency of satisfaction rather than the necessity is noted. For I do not see that in satisfaction the rooting out of the occasions of sin is necessary: nevertheless it is useful, and in a sense removes the impediments from one making satisfaction.¹²

It should not be imagined that to root out the causes of sin and merely to abstain from further sin are identical, or that one can make true exterior satisfaction by the mere fleeing of future sin. Abstinence from sin is rather the foundation of satisfaction. Satisfaction itself is a real punishment of past sins.

[Satisfaction can also be made] in another manner through the action of good works contrary to sins; and this is to punish sin and to be cured from sins—according as vices are said to be cured by their opposites.¹³

It is already evident from his comments on the description of Gennadius that Alexander views satisfaction both as a punishment for past sins and as a medicine to preserve one from future sins. In the definition of St. Anselm, Alexander points out the recipient of satisfaction: Almighty God offended by man. The honor to be returned to God in satisfaction is not the honor due to Him by reason of so many gifts and graces bestowed upon man. It is the honor due by reason of the debt of sin. The injustice of sin is an injustice against God. The honor due in satisfaction is the debt contracted by that injustice.¹⁴

Alexander distinguishes satisfaction into satisfaction in general and sacramental satisfaction. He also defines, though he does not do so explicitly, the difference between the two. He says: "Si autem placet dicere, quod causae peccatorum dicuntur occasiones: tunc magis notatur expeditio satisfactionis, quam necessitas. Non enim video quod in satisfactione necessaria sit excisio occasionum peccati: utilis tamen est, et quasi tollens impedimenta satisfaciendi."¹⁵ *Ibid.* (p. 646, 2): "Alio modo per actionem bonorum operum contrarium peccatis: et hoc est persequi peccatum, et curari a peccatis: prout dicitur contraria contrariis curantur."¹⁶ *Ibid.* (p. 647, 1-2).

not distinguish, what we now term extra-sacramental satisfaction. Satisfaction in general "is every penal work voluntarily adopted, whether that to which one is held by the judgment of God, or by the judgment of the priest."¹⁵ Sacramental satisfaction, which Alexander calls satisfaction proper, "is penance voluntarily adopted at the decision and by the judgment of the priest." This particular study begins with satisfaction in general, the principles of which apply to all satisfaction. Included in this general concept is the notion of extra-sacramental satisfaction, which the penitent undertakes of himself "for the completion, perfection, and security of satisfaction."¹⁶

SATISFACTORY WORKS

The parts of satisfaction or the classes to which all satisfactory works may be referred are prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. The terms by which these classes are designated must be understood neither in the strictest nor in the widest sense, but rather in their commonly accepted meaning. Thus "prayer includes every act of contemplation offered to God, . . . all affliction of the flesh is called fasting, . . . almsgiving . . . is every work of kindness, whether spiritual or corporal, performed for one's neighbor. . . ."¹⁷

This threefold classification of satisfactory works is fitting both because of the triple source of sin shown by St. John¹⁸ and because of the three recipients toward whom all actions may be directed.

And then the distinction and sufficiency of these [classes] appears from this fact: since there is a triple root of sin, according to which it is said: *either the lust of the flesh, against which works fasting; or the lust of the eyes, and against which works almsgiving; or the pride of life, and against this stands prayer.* Or in another fashion: a penal work is ordered either to God, and thus is prayer;

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, m. 5, a. 1 (p. 656, 1).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, m. 2, a. 1 (p. 642, 2).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, q. 25, m. 1 (p. 666, 1).

¹⁸ I John 2:16.

or to ourselves, and thus is fasting which afflicts our flesh; or to our neighbor, and thus is almsgiving.¹⁹

To this classification Alexander adds by implication another means of making satisfaction. He points out with St. Augustine that the willing acceptance of annoyances and temporal afflictions can be of much value to moral life, either in conquering pride or in developing patience.²⁰

Alexander adds that the works of all three classes are both satisfactory and medicinal. As satisfactory, the penal work is the price by which the debt of punishment is paid. As medicinal, the penal work heals the weakness of soul which is a consequence of sin.²¹ The medicinal character of these works, however, is not *effective* of spiritual health, since God alone heals the soul through the infusion of grace. Rather is satisfaction said to be a medicine of conservation, preservation, and amelioration strengthening the penitent against relapses into sin.²² It should be noted that while all three classes are satisfactory in every case, they do not offer in every case medicine of equal value. Thus fasting would satisfy for the sin of pride, but its greatest healing power works against sins of the flesh.

EFFECT OF SATISFACTION

The effect of satisfaction is the remission of the temporal punishment due to already remitted sins. Thus the penitent is absolved from the debt of the punishments of purgatory which are "incomparably more grave."²³

A secondary and medicinal effect of satisfaction has already been suggested in the fact that it procures the complete healing of the soul.

In common with all good works, works of satisfaction also merit an increase of glory.²⁴

¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*

²⁰ *Ibid.* (p. 667, 1).

²¹ *Ibid.*, q. 23, m. 1, a. 2 (p. 635, 2).

²² *Ibid.*, q. 25, m. 1 (p. 666, 2).

²³ *Ibid.*, q. 16, m. 1, a. 2 (p. 506, 1).

²⁴ *Ibid.*, q. 24, m. 4, a. 2, n. 3 (p. 650, 2).

NECESSITY OF SATISFACTION

Satisfaction is necessary to secure the remission of the debt of temporal punishment due to already forgiven sins.

Alexander of Hales begins by considering theoretically the question as to whether or not the temporal punishment due to sin must necessarily be forgiven when the guilt (with the eternal punishment) is remitted. His conclusion is in the negative.²⁵

As a matter of fact, in all remission of mortal sin, the guilt and the debt of eternal punishment are forgiven simultaneously. Yet the eternal punishment is not simply forgiven; rather is it commuted from eternal to temporal.²⁶

The facts are these. When man commits a mortal sin, he obliges himself to eternal punishment; when God forgives man, He remits the guilt and eternal punishment, but binds him to temporal punishment:

... when a sinner sins, he obliges himself to eternal punishment: when, however, divine mercy justifies him, it remits all guilt and the debt of eternal punishment, which clings inseparably to the guilt; but because mercy cannot be prejudicial (*non potest praepiudicare*) to justice, to which it pertains to punish evils, accordingly [mercy] looses from the guilt and punishment in such a way that he nevertheless remains obliged to some temporal punishment.²⁷

Alexander states further that a sinner guilty of mortal sin deserves not only temporal and eternal punishment, but even the punishment of being reduced to nothingness. The mercy of God is evidenced in the fact that God does not condemn the sinner to return to nothingness. Even were it to be supposed that the sinner merited only eternal punishment, temporal punishment is justly visited upon him after his justification because he actually deserved a punishment far greater, namely, the eternal punishment. The truth is that

²⁵ *Summa Theologiae*, P. IV, q. 12, m. 4, a. 3 (p. 446, 1).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, q. 14, m. 2, a. 1, n. 3 (p. 468, 2); cf. *ibid.*, q. 16, m. 1, a. 2 (p. 505, 1).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, q. 24, m. 3 (p. 647, 1).

in the absolution from the debt of eternal punishment he is obliged to a transitory punishment, either in purgatory, or in the present life; hence in the absolution from one, he is bound to the other.²⁸

Contrition may occasionally be so great that it will deliver from all punishment; otherwise it obtains the remission of only a part of the punishment.²⁹

The general rule is that a debt of temporal punishment remains after the guilt and eternal punishment have been remitted. Satisfaction is necessary to pay that debt in this present life; otherwise the debt will be exacted in the flames of purgatory.

POSSIBILITY OF SATISFACTION

Man is able to perform satisfaction and thus to secure the remission of the debt of temporal punishment in this life.

Alexander of Hales offers several foundations for the possibility of satisfaction. First, with divine help, which is certainly not lacking to any penitent, man can be contrite and can confess; therefore he can also make satisfaction. Secondly, since the penitent is not bound to the necessity of sinning, he can root out the causes of sin and refuse entrance to their suggestions. Finally, man can satisfy less merciful man; therefore he can certainly make satisfaction to God, most merciful.³⁰

The conclusion is that the penitent is able "to satisfy for his sin, both by internal and by external work, dependent, however, on the intervention of divine mercy giving grace." Alexander explains this conclusion at length.

There are two elements in mortal sin: aversion from the highest good, and conversion to changeable (*defectibile*) good. To these two elements, however, two others correspond: the offense of God and the pleasure (*libido*) of sin; to which latter two corresponds a twofold infinite punishment, namely, [that] of loss and of sense; to those two [elements], however, correspond two elements in satisfaction on the part of the penitent, perpetual

²⁸ *Ibid.*, q. 17, m. 4, a. 4, n. 2 (p. 537, 1).

²⁹ *Ibid.* (p. 537, 2).

³⁰ *Summa Theologiae*, P. IV, q. 24, m. 1 (p. 641, 1).

sorrow for the offense, and the sustaining of exterior punishment with divine mercy conferring grace, by which both are rendered acceptable to God.³¹

The sinner guilty of mortal sin actually deserves infinite punishment because he has offended the infinite majesty of God. Alexander's original words are clear:

Quia enim peccator peccando offendit illum, qui est bonitatis simpliciter, aeternae, et infinitae: oportet quod in suo infinito et aeterno puniatur, dolendo pro offensa illa, et detestando.³²

Were this infinite punishment to be exacted, the way of satisfaction would be closed to finite man. Fortunately that is not the case.

In fact, because divine mercy anticipates (*praevenerit*) the satisfaction of the penitent, by conferring grace, and by forgiving the infinite debt, it is possible for the penitent to satisfy by an interior work, sorrowing for the offense, and by an exterior work for the pleasure (*libidine*) taken in the act of sin. And in both of them concur mercy and justice on the part of God, mercy by forgiving completely the infinite debt both of the pain of loss and of the pain of sense; and justice in demanding some punishment.³³

This infinite debt, which no mere man could pay, was paid by Jesus Christ, the Mediator of God and man. Only by faith in His passion can the sinner be justified and sin remitted.

Whence our satisfaction has value wholly from the satisfaction of Christ, which satisfaction indeed has its effect

³¹ *Ibid.* (p. 641, 2): "In peccato mortali sunt duo; aversio a summo bono, et conversio ad bonum defectibile. His autem duobus respondent alia duo, offensa Dei, et libido peccati; quibus duobus respondet duplex poena infinita, scilicet, damni, et sensus; istis autem duobus respondent duo in satisfactione ex parte poenitentis, dolor perpetuus de offensa, et sustinentia poenae exterioris cum divina misericordia conferente gratiam, qua utrumque praedictorum efficitur Deo acceptum."

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

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in the members of Christ through the sacraments; as through Baptism it has the fullness of its effect, both in regard to guilt and in regard to punishment, and through Penance [it has its effect] in part: therefore all satisfaction for sin is founded upon the satisfaction of the Mediator.³⁴

The fact that temporal punishment remains even after the forgiveness of the guilt and eternal punishment does not argue an insufficiency in the passion of Christ. Christ suffered on the Cross for the sins of all mankind. In Baptism, Christ's fullness is applied to the soul without any further requirement. In Penance, God has willed that we should make satisfaction for our offenses.³⁵

CONDITIONS

The first requisite of satisfaction is that it be acceptable to God. The works are rendered thus by grace.³⁶

On the part of man, two conditions are necessary. Man must enjoy present life, during which period alone the debt of temporal punishment due to remitted sin can be paid by satisfaction. After the present life, that temporal punishment is exacted in purgatory.³⁷

Man must also be in the state of grace. Alexander makes grace a condition of all penance, which does not exist "without *gratia gratum faciente* or *gratia data*, and this disposes the possessor as worthy of pardon."³⁸ The devil is incapable of making satisfaction precisely because he is incapable of receiving grace, which "is the substratum and principle (*ratio*) of satisfaction."³⁹

Man must satisfy in charity because satisfaction implies the acceptance of God.⁴⁰

³⁴ *Ibid.* (p. 641, 2); p. 642, 1).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, q. 8, m. 8, a. 2, n. 2 (p. 178, 1).

³⁶ *Sacra Theologiae*, P. IV, q. 24, m. 1 (p. 641, 2); cf. *ibid.*, m. 4, a. 1 (p. 648, 1).

³⁷ *Ibid.*, q. 17, m. 4, a. 4, n. 2 (p. 537, 1); cf. *ibid.*, q. 15, m. 2, a. 3 (p. 487, 2); q. 20, m. 5 (p. 607, 2).

³⁸ *Ibid.*, q. 12, m. 4, a. 2 (p. 445, 1-2).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, q. 24, m. 1 (p. 641, 2).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, m. 4, a. 2, n. 1 (p. 649, 1). Alexander views *gratia gratum*

It can be said that satisfaction (even as regards the term itself) implies divine acceptance and reconciliation with God: and since without *gratia gratum faciente* it is impossible for a person to please God, or for his works to be accepted: therefore neither is it possible to make satisfaction without charity.⁴¹

The most Alexander will allow to a penitent without charity is that he may prepare himself for the possession of charity and for the performance of satisfaction.⁴²

Satisfactory works performed in the state of mortal sin are of no satisfactory value because they are neither acceptable to God, nor productive of reconciliation with God. Therefore, at least in the case of sacramental satisfaction, a satisfactory work performed in the state of mortal sin must be repeated.⁴³

Satisfactory works performed in the state of grace are not rendered null by a subsequent mortal sin, although they would be deadened (*morificata*).⁴⁴ Upon the return of sanctifying grace, their value returns. Works of satisfaction performed in the state of mortal sin are dead from the beginning because they proceed from a lifeless principle. They are not revived by the return of grace or charity, and hence never produce remission of punishment nor an increase of glory.⁴⁵

Further conditions are required on the part of the work of satisfaction. Because a satisfactory work must be acceptable to God, it is apparent that it must be a good work.

It must be voluntary. Alexander states that both satisfaction in general and also sacramental satisfaction are characterized by the essential element of the voluntary assumption of the work.⁴⁶ It must be supernatural. This condition is not stated in so many words, but it is implied. Satisfaction is made to God to atone for the injustice of sin. It must be performed in charity.

faciens as the first of the three principles of works. Works or acts which proceed from this principle are said to be "from charity, or in charity."

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, a. 1 (p. 648, 1).

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*, a. 2, n. 1 (p. 649, 1).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, n. 2 (p. 649, 2).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, n. 3 (p. 650, 2).

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, m. 5, a. 1 (p. 656, 1).

Moreover, it is a general principle of Alexander that the will to do penance or even to do any good cannot be without grace. It is difficult to decide whether Alexander intends to imply actual grace or not. But he does state that "we are not able to will meritorious or gratuitous good except by the help of grace."⁴⁷

It must be penal, and, in the case of sacramental satisfaction, external.⁴⁸ Alexander lists several reasons for the requirement of a penal work. He also notes clearly that the work must be penal objectively or *per se*, and not merely penal to the individual penitent by reason of the weakness of will induced by his sins.⁴⁹

VICARIOUS SATISFACTION

"One person can make satisfaction for another by reason of the unity of charity existing among the members of the Mystical Body of Christ." Such vicarious satisfaction, however, is possible only in so far as satisfaction is a payment of the debt of temporal punishment. As medicinal, satisfaction must be performed by the penitent himself, because the disease of one person is not healed through the punishment of another.⁵⁰

Such vicarious satisfaction may be made only on the authority of a superior, who must consider the due disposition in the subjects involved and the due proportion in punishment assigned. The due disposition in the subjects consists of the "sufficiency in the one, and a need in the other, and in both charity, which makes all goods common." The due proportion in punishment demands a greater punishment in the one performing vicarious satisfaction since "one's own punishment for his sin offers more satisfaction to God than the punishment of another."⁵¹

Alexander limits this conclusion in the case of satisfaction made for another who is still alive. He still demands the "content of the keys," but he adds the further condition that the

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, q. 13, m. 2 (p. 455, 1).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, q. 24, m. 2, a. 1 (p. 642, 2).

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, a. 2 (p. 643, 1).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, q. 23, m. 1, a. 2 (p. 635, 2).

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

one for whom satisfaction is to be made must be incapable (*impotens*) of performing it.⁵²

SACRAMENTAL SATISFACTION

Sacramental satisfaction, or satisfaction proper, is "penance voluntarily adopted at the decision and judgment of the priest."⁵³ As enjoined by the priest possessing the power of the keys, it is an integral part of the sacrament of Penance.⁵⁴

The will to make satisfaction is an essential part or element of true contrition, since Alexander of Hales names it in the definition of contrition.⁵⁵ Actual satisfaction, however, is ordinarily preceded by contrition and confession.⁵⁶

The sacramental remission of post-baptismal sin according to the view of Alexander fixes the part of the priest in satisfaction. Alexander holds that God alone can absolve from the guilt and the eternal punishment of mortal sin. Therefore he ascribes to contrition the remission of the guilt and the commutation of the eternal punishment into temporal punishment. In confession, by the power of the keys, the priest absolves the penitent from part of the temporal punishment and assigns satisfactory penance for the remainder.⁵⁷

It is true that satisfaction is made primarily to God,

but since the sinner offended God, and brought damage to the Church, the Lord committed judicial power over sinners to the leaders of the Church, and agreed upon them as upon judges, so that the will of God might be made known to penitents through the priests, and through them penance be imposed upon sinners: and that they [sinners] might make satisfaction principally to God, and consequently to the Church.⁵⁸

Alexander goes on to explain the manner in which the con-

⁵² *Ibid.*, q. 24, m. 4, a. 4 (p. 654, 2).

⁵³ *Summa Theologiae*, P. IV, q. 24, m. 5, a. 1 (p. 656, 1).

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, q. 16, m. 1, a. 2 (pp. 504, 2; 506, 1); cf. *ibid.*, m. 2 (p. 507, 1).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, q. 17, m. 1, a. 3 (p. 510, 1).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, q. 16, m. 1, a. 2 (p. 505, 1); cf. *ibid.*, q. 20, m. 5 (p. 607, 2).

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, q. 24, m. 3 (p. 647, 1).

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fessor exercises this power given to him by God. The penitent, freed from the guilt of mortal sin and the debt of eternal punishment due to it, remains bound by a debt of temporal punishment;

... that punishment, however, because of the rigour of divine justice is out of proportion to our strength and hidden from our knowledge, and it is for that [punishment] that satisfaction must be made to God. Therefore divine mercy has provided a way for us, and has constituted the priest a judge, to whom it has given the power of deciding and enjoining penance, and manifesting it to us, and [power] to remit part of the punishment by virtue of the passion of Christ, so that divine justice may not demand payment for that part. . . .⁵⁹

By the power of the keys the priest absolves from part of the debt of temporal punishment, and for the remainder he enjoins satisfactory penance. The penitent must accept the penance enjoined by the priest, and when he fulfills that penance he is freed from the debt which would otherwise be exacted in purgatory. If the penitent, however, "contemns the solution of that [temporal] punishment, he is rendered guilty of eternal." If fulfillment becomes impossible, the penitent will suffer the incomparably graver pains of purgatory.⁶⁰

Alexander of Hales implies an obligation on the part of the priest to enjoin a proportioned penance. He interprets the admonition: "Bring forth fruits befitting repentance," as a command to fruitful penance or completed satisfaction. Fruits befitting of the punishment are brought forth when the "quantity and quality of the guilt."⁶¹

In practice, that proportion of punishment to guilt will be neither the product of purely arbitrary judgment on the part of the priest nor the blind application of the canons of penance handed down. Rather will a middle position be sought so that the penances recommended in the canons will be moderated discreetly, according to the decision reached by the priest from a

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, q. 21, m. 2, a. 1 (p. 615, 2).
⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, q. 16, m. 1, a. 2 (p. 506, 1).
⁶¹ *Ibid.*

consideration of the dispositions and weakness of the penitent.⁶² Ordinarily satisfaction is to be assigned. Even where the depth of contrition is so great that it suffices to remove the entire debt of punishment, satisfaction is still to be enjoined; the existence of such contrition usually remains unknown to the penitent and the priest. If that fact should be known by the priest, "then he should not impose penance, but should absolve the absolved."⁶³

Whenever the priest assigns satisfactory penance beyond what is actually due, its fulfillment accumulates merits both for the penitent making satisfaction and for the treasury of the Church.⁶⁴ If the priest should assign a penance which is less than condign and the penitent performs only that penance before death, the deceased penitent "without a doubt will pay the remainder in purgatory." He is freed only from that debt for which he has made satisfaction.⁶⁵

The only case in which Alexander of Hales foresees the cessation of the priest's obligation to enjoin penance is in ministrations to those who are too weak or feeble to sustain penalties.

It must be said that, if such be supposed, which either never or rarely happens, except perhaps in serious and prolonged ill-health, such laborious works are not to be imposed upon such persons, but for them perpetual sorrow and detestation of the sin committed suffices.⁶⁶

SAINT BONAVENTURE (1221-1274)

Saint Bonaventure was born at Bagnorea near Viterbo in 1221. Tradition reports that he was cured of a serious illness and imminent death through the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi (+1226). Bonaventure may have begun his early education at the convent in Bagnorea. He went to Paris where he studied the arts (1236-1242) and received the degree of Master of Arts. He joined the Franciscans in Paris. Some authorities place his entrance into the Order of Friars Minor in 1238 and others in

⁶² *Ibid.*, q. 21, m. 3, a. 1 (p. 618, 1).
⁶³ *Ibid.*, q. 24, m. 3 (p. 647, 1); cf. *ibid.*, q. 17, m. 1, a. 3 (p. 510, 1).
⁶⁴ *Ibid.*
⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, q. 21, m. 3, a. 1 (p. 618, 2).
⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, q. 24, m. 2, a. 2 (p. 643, 1).

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1243 or 1244. This latter date seems to fit in better with other known dates and facts in his life.⁶⁷

In Paris Bonaventure followed the lectures of Alexander of Hales. In 1248 he began to teach the Scriptures as a Bachelor. In 1250-1251 Bonaventure began to explain Peter Lombard, in this instance as a Bachelor of the Sentences. In 1253 he became a Doctor of Theology, an achievement which earlier opinion placed in 1257, making both Bonaventure and St. Thomas simultaneous recipients of the same degree.⁶⁸

In 1257, most probably on February 2nd, Bonaventure was elected Minister General of the Friars Minor. He governed the Order with great success until May 20, 1274. At that time he was succeeded by Jerome of Ascoli, later Pope Nicholas IV, at the General Chapter at Lyons.

In 1265 Bonaventure pleaded to be excused from the Archbishopric of York to which Clement IV had appointed him. Yet eight years later, on May 23, 1273, he was created a Cardinal and named Bishop of Albano by Gregory X. The same Supreme Pontiff appointed Bonaventure to prepare the questions to be discussed at the Fourteenth Ecumenical Council at Lyons which opened its sessions on May 7, 1274.

Saint Bonaventure died on July 15th, a few weeks after the work of the Council had gotten under way. He was canonized by Sixtus IV on April 14, 1482. Sixtus V declared him a Doctor of the Church on March 14, 1587-1588.

Two of Bonaventure's written works are of primary interest to theologians. The first is his *Commentarium in Libros Sententiarum*, written at the command of his superiors in 1248 when Bonaventure was only twenty-seven years of age.⁶⁹ The second work is the *Breviloquium* which dates from 1257.

NATURE OF SATISFACTION

Saint Bonaventure sheds a new light on the treatments of *67 E. Longpré, "Bonaventure (Saint)," DHGE, IX (1937), 745.*
68 Ibid., 748-749.

69 This Commentary, which is the source used in the present study, occupies the first four volumes of the Quaracchi critical edition of Bonaventure's Opera Omnia.

satisfaction which preceded his work by pointing out that the term satisfaction is used in two senses. On the one hand, satisfaction identifies the total process of reconciliation with God after the estrangement of sin; since all parts of Penance cooperate in this reconciliation, they are all termed satisfaction or satisfaction. On the other hand, satisfaction connotes the payment of punishment due; *properly* it is applied only to one part of Penance, which is the acceptance or fulfillment of enjoined punishment; *per accidens* it is applied also to contrition by reason of the sensible sorrow accompanying it and to confession because of the shame involved in it.⁷⁰ With this caution as an introduction, the later considerations will be more easily understood.

Satisfaction is an act (*pars potestativa*) of the virtue of penance.⁷¹ The very notion of complete satisfaction demands two elements: present amendment for past guilt and the firm resolve to avoid future guilt. St. Bonaventure is aware of the definition of satisfaction given by St. Anselm: "To satisfy is to return the honor due to God."⁷² Yet, in view of the two elements of satisfaction, Bonaventure prefers to make more extensive use of the definition of Gennadius: "To satisfy is to root out the causes of sin and not to allow entrance to their suggestions."⁷³ Present amendment for past guilt is best achieved by removing through sorrow and punishment the sins pursued with delight; in that sense, to satisfy is to root out the causes of sin. The firm resolution against a relapse into sin is expressed in the denial of entrance to the suggestion of sin.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ *In IVum Librum Sententiarum*, Dist. XVI, p. I, dub. 2, p. 397.
⁷¹ *Ibid.*, dub. 1, p. 397.

⁷² Anselmus, *Cur Deus Homo*, Lib. I, 11 (PL 158, 377 A).

⁷³ Gennadius, *De Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus*, 54 (PL 58, 994 C).

⁷⁴ *Op. cit.*, Dist. XV, p. II, a. 1, q. 1, p. 362. The editors of this Quaracchi edition of St. Bonaventure's works further clarify the notion of satisfaction. In the Scholion to this question they state: "Vocabulum satisfactionis, novatoribus saeculi XVI quam maxime odiosum, in genere ad mentem nostri Doctoris sic definitur potest: est redditio voluntaria aequivalentis alias indebiti ad compensandam iniuriam. Prout autem specialiter sumitur ut satisfactio sacramentalis, est actio aliqua poenalis, consistens in bonis operibus, a sacerdote in Sacramento poenitentiae impositis, ad compensandam aliquatenus solutione poenae temporalis iniuriam Deo per peccatum illatam."

From what has been said, it is apparent that satisfaction must fulfill the role of punishment and of medicine. St. Bonaventure adds with St. Anselm that it must return honor to God. As a result, "satisfaction is made through penal works." The reasons already indicated postulate such a procedure. First of all, by his sin man has failed in his obligation of honoring God, and accordingly must return that honor in greater measure than would be required if he had not taken away that honor by his sin. Therefore, man must not only return to God through good works, but he must cast himself down through punishment. Besides, the deordination produced by sin is best readjusted and reordered through punishment; the sinner weakened by the heat of sinful pleasure is cured through the frigidity of a penalty; the debt of punishment contracted by sin is satisfied through punishment.⁷⁵

SATISFACTORY WORKS

Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are the three classes into which penal or satisfactory works are divided. They form, as it were, "the parts of satisfaction." St. Bonaventure notes that the terms by which these classes are designated are to be understood neither in their strictest nor in their widest sense, but in the meaning accorded them by common usage. Thus prayer includes every act of contemplation referred to God; fasting includes all affliction of the flesh; almsgiving includes every act of kindness toward one's neighbor, whether that act be spiritual or corporal.⁷⁶

EFFECT OF SATISFACTION

The effect of satisfaction performed through these works is the solution of the debt of temporal punishment and, as a result, the avoidance of the more painful punishment which would otherwise be exacted in purgatory. For no one can enter Heaven with a debt of temporal punishment; that debt must be paid on earth through satisfaction and absolution, or after this life in the flames of purgatory.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, q. 3, p. 365.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, q. 4, p. 368.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Dist. XX, p. 1, a. unicus, q. 1, pp. 517-519.

NECESSITY OF SATISFACTION

Satisfaction is necessary because it was preached by St. John the Baptist and commanded by Christ. St. Bonaventure admits that the Baptist could not command satisfaction of his own power. Yet he "did prescribe it by insinuation and preaching; but Christ commanded it as the principal author, because John went before and spoke, in the third chapter of St. Matthew, but the Saviour ratified and instituted, as appears in the fourth chapter of the same author."⁷⁸

The reason for the necessity of satisfaction is man's obligation to atone to God for the injustice of sin. When man commits a mortal sin, he subjects himself to the bond of eternal punishment. But when Divine Mercy forgives that sin, it forgives and remits also the eternal punishment which inseparably accompanies the guilt. Yet, in exercising mercy, God cannot violate His justice which punishes evil. Hence God forgives the guilt of sin and the debt of eternal punishment in such a way that the sinner remains bound by the debt of some temporal punishment.⁷⁹

POSSIBILITY OF SATISFACTION

This temporal punishment can be remitted through satisfaction. St. Bonaventure presents several foundations for the possibility of satisfaction before he offers his doctrine. Since, according to St. Anselm, to satisfy is to pay back the honor due to God, man is able to satisfy because he is able to return the honor due to God. In the second place, according to the degree of mercy in him who is offended, the punishment will be determined; since God is most merciful, He will demand less punishment; therefore, man, who can make satisfaction to less merciful man, can surely make satisfaction to God. Finally, since man can suffer torment in the measure that his sin brought delight, he can make satisfaction to God.⁸⁰

Beyond these preliminary foundations, St. Bonaventure ventures two methods of explaining the possibility of satisfaction to

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, Dist. XVI, p. 1, dub. 5, p. 398.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2, pp. 363-364.

⁸⁰ *In IV^{um} Librum*, Dist. XV, p. 1, a. unicus, q. 1, p. 350.

God. The facts of forgiveness adduced previously in showing the necessity of satisfaction apply here also; of himself, man cannot possibly make satisfaction for all the evil of sin; hence it follows there can be no satisfaction for sin unless some condonation of sin precedes it. In the words of St. Bonaventure:

... this is one manner of speaking sufficiently probable, that satisfaction is not made for all that is in sin, because this is impossible. Whence also God does not demand satisfaction for all that is in sin, but He condones something through mercy, He requires satisfaction for the rest through justice, so that both mercy and truth may be present; nor is there ever satisfaction, unless condonation precedes, just as there is never merit, unless a gratuitous gift precedes.⁸¹

According to this opinion, God forgives the offense and punishes the finite inordinate inclination.

Whence be it noted that there are two things in sin, namely, the offense against God and the inordinate appetite. The offense against God is infinite and satisfaction is not made for it, but the mercy of God remits it by giving His grace; the perverse appetite, however, is finite. And because God is just, He does not remit the whole, but for that [appetite] He demands condign punishment; in this regard it is possible to make satisfaction to God.⁸²

⁸¹ *Ibid.*: "Respondeo: Dicendum, quod hic est unus modus dicendi satis probabilis, quod de omni eo quod est in peccato, non fit satisfactio, quoniam hoc est impossibile. Unde et Deus non exigit satisfactionem de omni eo quod est in culpa, sed aliquid condonat per misericordiam, de aliquo requirit satisfactionem per justitiam, ut simul sit hic misericordia et veritas; nec unquam est satisfactio, nisi praeceat condonatio, sicut nunquam est meritum, nisi praeceat donum gratuitum."

⁸² *Ibid.*: "Unde notandum, quod in peccato duo sunt, scilicet offensa Dei et libido deordinata. Offensa Dei est infinita, et pro illa non fit satisfactio, sed Dei misericordia illam remittit suam dando gratiam; libido autem perversa finita est. Et quia Deus justus est, non totum remittit, sed pro illa exigit poenam condignam; et quantum ad hoc possibile est Deo satisfacere." It is useful to note that the editors in the Scholion point out that St. Thomas (*In Lib. IV^{um}*, Dist. XV, q. 1, a. 2, sol., ad 1um) argues against this opinion because the satisfaction does not answer for the sin except in part.

The second opinion, which St. Bonaventure offers as "sufficiently probable and reasonable," is that God indeed forgives the offense by infusing grace, but He does not so completely forgive it that He does not demand punishment in justice. Since man cannot make satisfaction for so great an offense, God gave to man a Mediator Who would satisfy for the offense. Hence, all our satisfaction has its value through faith in the Passion of Christ and its effect through the satisfaction of Christ.

Another manner of speaking is also sufficiently probable and seems reasonable, that even though the divine mercy releases the offense by giving grace to man, it does not, however, in this way so entirely release it that it does not also demand for the offense satisfaction through justice. And because man was not able to make satisfaction for so great an offense, accordingly God gave to him a Mediator, Who would satisfy for the offense. Whence only in the faith of the Passion of Christ is all guilt remitted; for without faith no one is justified; and according to this fact they say, that all our satisfaction has value from the satisfaction of Christ.⁸³

The full effect of the Passion of Christ is applied in the sacrament of Baptism; in the sacrament of Penance that effect is only partial (*secundum partem*).⁸⁴

CONDITIONS

The conditions under which man can make satisfaction appear with great clearness in St. Bonaventure.

⁸³ *Ibid.*: "Alius etiam modus dicendi est satis probabilis et videtur rationabilis, quod etsi divina misericordia relinquit offensam homini dando gratiam, non tamen ita omnino relinquit, quin etiam exigat de offensa satisfactionem per justitiam. Et quia homo non potuit pro tanta offensa satisfacere, ideo Deus dedit ei Mediatorem, qui satisfaceret pro offensa. Unde in sola fide passionis Christi remittitur omnis culpa; sine fide enim nullus justificatur; et secundum hoc dicunt, quod omnis satisfactio nostra virtutem habet a satisfactione Christi."

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* The editors also note in the Scholion that while St. Bonaventure does not explicitly reject the first opinion, he does favor and use the second opinion throughout his treatment of satisfaction, and he approves the principles involved in it; namely, that all our satisfaction derives its value from the satisfaction of Christ, and that our satisfaction is infinite in so far as it is Christ's.

On the part of God, there must be acceptance plus divine reconciliation and friendship.

Man must enjoy temporal life and the possession of sanctifying grace and charity, for, " . . . since without *gratia gratum faciens* and charity it is impossible that anyone please God and that his works be accepted, therefore neither is it possible to make satisfaction" without *gratia gratum faciens* and charity.⁸⁵ As an introduction to this declaration, St. Bonaventure repeats the argument now familiar from Peter Lombard. Those who maintain that a man can satisfy for one mortal sin while persisting in another are mistaken. Satisfaction is not the mere enduring of punishment; God finds no delight in man's sufferings as such, but He is pleased by the justice of man's will and by reconciliation. These latter, however, postulate for many reasons the complete removal of all mortal sins at one time. Man cannot satisfy God while offending Him; he cannot be at one and the same time God's friend and enemy.⁸⁶

In the case of sacramental satisfaction performed in the state of mortal sin, Saint Bonaventure admits that the penitent fulfills the precept of the confessor: "And therefore I say, that when that enjoined work has been completed, he is not held to repeat it." As long as the penitent has done his best to dispose himself, he is absolved in the eyes of the Church and of his own conscience. Moreover, in the sight of God he would commit no sin by thus fulfilling his penance in the state of sin.⁸⁷ Yet the penitent still owes the debt of temporal punishment which God will exact at a later time if it is not paid during life.⁸⁸

The most that St. Bonaventure would allow for satisfactory works performed without charity is that they might possibly be revivified when charity returns, but only in so far as they effect remission of punishment and not with any value meritorious of

⁸⁵ *In IV^o Librum*, Dist. XV, p. 1, a. unicus, q. 3, p. 353.
⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, q. 2, p. 352.

⁸⁷ The more probable opinion today, as noted in the introductory section, is that the penitent does fulfill the precept, but by fulfilling it in mortal sin probably sins venially. (Cf. St. Alphonsus, *Theologia Moralis*, II, lib. VI, t. iv, nn. 522-523.)

⁸⁸ *Op. cit.*, Dist. XV, p. 1, a. unicus, q. 3, ad 3um et 4um, pp. 353-354.

eternal life. St. Bonaventure saw this opinion of revivification as very probable; nevertheless, he held that to deny any such revivification was much more secure.⁸⁹

Man also needs the help of actual grace in order to perform satisfaction. In a general way, St. Bonaventure holds that man needs the help of God in order to pay the debt of sin. Man of himself cannot pay the debt which he contracts by sin because he renders himself incapable of such action. Yet, being bound to satisfaction, man "is not obliged to the impossible; for, although it is impossible to him of himself, nevertheless it is possible to him through divine help."⁹⁰ Unless the mercy of God comes to the rescue of sinful man, he cannot be saved.

In particular, it may be stated that St. Bonaventure seems to maintain the necessity of actual grace. Bonaventure explicitly states that man in the fallen state cannot perform meritorious works "without the help of *gratia gratum faciens*."⁹¹ At first glance this statement would seem to signify habitual rather than actual grace. Yet St. Bonaventure himself states that the gifts of *gratia gratum faciens* apply both to habits and to acts of perfection.⁹² Of even greater value is the observation made by the Quaracchi editors of St. Bonaventure's works. Having noted that the terminology in the field of grace was certainly not fixed in Bonaventure's day, they point out that Bonaventure, following Alexander of Hales, when he speaks about a person in the state of grace includes not only the theological virtues, but also actual graces under the single term *gratia gratum faciens* without any nominal distinction. But when he speaks about the gifts of actual grace, and the virtues of faith and hope in the case in which they are not joined to sanctifying grace, Bonaventure applies the term *gratiae gratis datae*.⁹³ Hence on the authority of the critical editors, it is at least possible that Bonaventure intended to demand actual grace in the general term *gratia gratum faciens*. The tenor of his writing and especially his stress on

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, q. 4, p. 355.

⁹⁰ *In II^{um} Librum*, Dist. XX, a. unicus, q. 4, ad 2um, p. 426.

⁹¹ *In II^{um} Librum*, Dist. XXVIII, a. 2, q. 3, pp. 689-690.

⁹² *Ibid.*, Dist. XXIX, a. 3, q. 1, p. 705.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, Dist. XXXVI, a. unicus, q. 1, Scholion, p. 632.

the need of divine help would make it probable that he does so. St. Bonaventure further implies or explicitly demands certain conditions on the part of the satisfactory work. That the work of satisfaction must proceed from the free will of the sinner is implied by St. Bonaventure; he states that man's satisfaction consists not merely in the toleration of punishment, but also and principally in the justice of his will. Since man cannot make satisfaction to God by offending God, the satisfactory work must be good; in fact satisfaction presupposes a good work.⁹⁴ The satisfactory work must be supernatural, because it must return the honor due to God and must proceed with the help of actual grace.

The explicit demand is for the penal character of the satisfactory work. We have seen that St. Bonaventure sees punishment as essential to the performance of satisfaction and even essential to the concept of satisfaction. It is useful to note that St. Bonaventure insists that the penal character of the work must be that which attaches to the work of its very nature. The possibility that a satisfactory work may be much more difficult because of the sins and deordination of will of the person making that satisfaction, does not necessarily give that work a greater satisfactory value. Thus it would be more painful to an avaricious sinner to make a charitable donation of money as alms than it would be to a generous penitent; that personal difficulty, according to St. Bonaventure, would not necessarily make the miser's alms of greater satisfactory value.⁹⁵

VICARIOUS SATISFACTION

The bond of charity existing between the faithful makes possible satisfaction by one person for another. Vicarious satisfaction in this sense, however, is possible only in so far as satisfaction is a *penalty* to pay the debt of temporal punishment. The transfer of the penalty from one person to another may be made only upon the authority of the confessor who must verify two conditions. He must be assured that there is due disposition present, namely, that the one penitent has the sufficiency from

⁹⁴ *In IVum Librum*, Dist. XV, p. II, a. 1, q. 3, p. 365.
⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, ad 4um, p. 365.

which to pay the debt and that the other needs the debt paid in that way. He must also be assured that both penitents possess charity by which their works become common to each other.

In the second place, the confessor must be certain that there is due proportion in the penalty assigned. St. Bonaventure holds that "one's own punishment offers greater satisfaction to God than punishment vicariously sustained by another." Hence the confessor must assign a proportionately greater satisfaction to be performed by the second party.⁹⁶

In so far as satisfaction is medicinal, it cannot be transferred from one penitent to another. Punishment *cures* him alone who sustains it.⁹⁷

SACRAMENTAL SATISFACTION

Thus far we have seen satisfaction in its more general aspects as an act of the virtue of penance. Now in particular we must inspect St. Bonaventure's teaching on sacramental satisfaction.⁹⁸ Satisfaction is an integral part of the sacrament of Penance.⁹⁹ Together with contrition and confession, it forms the matter of the sacrament. In the words of St. Bonaventure:

The matter in this sacrament, however, is the humiliation of the penitent either as regards the act of contrition, or the word of accusation, or the punishment of satisfaction.⁹⁹

This text also suggests something confirmed elsewhere, that satisfaction follows contrition and confession.¹⁰⁰

Satisfaction becomes sacramental through the injunction of the priest-confessor. The facts of forgiveness of mortal sin, namely, the removal of the guilt and of the accompanying debt of eternal punishment and the usual persistence of a debt of temporal punishment, apply here also. This debt of temporal punishment must be paid to God offended by man's sin. Yet man also brings

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, Dist. XX, p. II, a. unicus, q. 1, pp. 530-531.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ *In IVum Librum*, Dist. XVI, p. I, dub. 1, p. 397.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, Dist. XXII, a. 2, q. 2, p. 581.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, Dist. XX, p. II, a. unicus, q. 1, sol. 4, p. 531.

damage to the Church of God by his sin. Hence God has committed into the hands of the leaders of the Church judicial power over sinners. Through His priests God makes known His will to penitents, and through His priests God imposes punishment upon sinners. In this way satisfaction is made principally to God and consequently also to the Church. It is in this sense that St. Bonaventure declares: "Satisfaction for sin is properly made to God Himself, yet through the Church and in the Church."¹⁰¹

The temporal punishment which is remitted through sacramental satisfaction must be distinguished from the total debt of temporal punishment which ordinarily remains after the remission of the guilt and debt of eternal punishment. In His mercy, God has given His priests the power to reduce this total temporal debt. This total debt of temporal punishment is unknown to the penitent and, in any case, is out of proportion to man's capacity to pay it; hence the priest has power to judge the case and then to enjoin and manifest to the penitent a certain punishment through sacramental satisfaction. The remainder of the total debt he remits by the power of the keys through the merits of the Passion of Christ. What the priest remits through the merits of Christ is never again charged against the penitent; but for the rest, unless the penitent fulfills the assigned satisfaction or is punished sufficiently on earth in some way, payment will be demanded in purgatory.¹⁰²

The satisfaction assigned by the priest must be proportioned to the offense; otherwise there will remain the severe punishments of purgatory. The temporal punishment due to already remitted sin can be removed through satisfaction; if it is not so removed, punishment will certainly come in purgatory.

The proportion of satisfaction to the offense will, of course, vary according to the intensity of contrition. St. Bonaventure acknowledges that contrition may be so great on occasion that it will suffice even for the total remission of the debt of temporal punishment. But since this fact is not evident to the priest, he must nevertheless impose satisfaction. If, however, he were to be certain that the penitent had made full satisfaction through

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, p. II, a. 1, q. 2, pp. 363-364.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, Dist. XVIII, p. I, a. 2, q. 2, p. 477.

contrition, then he should not impose any penance. But even in such a case, if the priest, mistaken about the intensity of contrition, should assign a penance, the merits of that penance when performed would accrue to the penitent or add to the treasury of the Church.¹⁰³

Since satisfaction is due not only for a punishment of past sin but also as a preservative against future falls, it must provide a medicine against sin.¹⁰⁴ This medicinal character will best be fulfilled when opposite punishment is enjoined for sins. Thus fasting opposes the concupiscence of the flesh, almsgiving counteracts the concupiscence of the eyes, and prayer wars against the pride of life.¹⁰⁵

SAINT ALBERT THE GREAT (ca. 1206-1280)

Saint Albert the Great, Catholic scientist, philosopher, and theologian, was born about the year 1206 in Lauingen, Swabia, in Germany. He was the eldest son of the Count of Bollstädt, and as such was able to pursue his studies at the University of Padua, known for its cultivation of the liberal arts.

In 1223, Albert joined the Order of Preachers. After completing his studies, probably at the convent in Cologne, he taught theology at Cologne, Hildesheim, Freiburg (Breisgau), Ratisbon, and Strasbourg. There is some confusion about the actual dates of Albert's stay in Paris, though there is no doubt as to the fact of his presence there. It seems that he may have been sent to Paris as a Bachelor of the Sentences in 1240/42. He is also named as the Regent of Saint Jacques (1242-1248), one of two Dominican schools incorporated into the University of Paris. At Paris also he received his doctoral degree in theology.

In 1248, Albert returned to Cologne as Regent of the new *Studium Generale* in that city. He later became Provincial of the Dominicans in Germany (1254-1257) and Bishop of Ratisbon (1260-1262). He resigned the latter charge in order to dedicate himself entirely to study, teaching, and writing.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, p. II, a. 1, q. 2, ad 3um, p. 364.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, Dist. XX, p. II, a. unicus, q. 1, p. 550.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, p. II, a. 1, q. 4, p. 368.

At the behest of Pope Gregory X, he took an active part in the deliberations of the Council of Lyons in 1274.

About a year before his death Albert, weakened by constant labors, suffered a loss of memory. His death came at Cologne on November 15, 1280.

Albert was beatified by Pope Gregory XV in 1622. In September, 1872, the German bishops, assembled at Fulda, sent a petition for his canonization to Rome. His canonization by cult was recognized by Pope Pius XI on December 16, 1931, when he declared Saint Albert the Great a Doctor of the Universal Church.

Albert, with Alexander of Hales, pioneered the application of Aristotelian methods and principles to theological studies. Through his efforts, the editions of Aristotle were purged of the false conclusions of Averroism, Rationalism, and Pantheism. Though he followed Aristotle, Albert gave due recognition to Plato and St. Augustine. His position is somewhere between Peter Lombard and St. Thomas, his pupil whose greatness he foretold. His principal works in theology are his *Commentarium in Quattuor Libros Sententiarum* and his *Summa Theologiae*.¹⁰⁶

NATURE OF SATISFACTION

Saint Albert the Great treats formally only sacramental satisfaction. In the course of his writing, however, sufficient indications may be gathered to form a notion of his view of satisfaction in general or extra-sacramental satisfaction.

As an act, satisfaction is a kind of justice (*species justitiae*).¹⁰⁷ In this Albert differs from most of the other theologians, who viewed satisfaction as an act of the specific virtue of penance.

It may be said in general that Albert views satisfaction as the means by which man pays the debt of temporal punishment due to his sins even after the remission of the sin and the debt of eternal punishment.

He offers three definitions of satisfaction. The first is satisfied in *Opera Omnia*, 21 vols. (Lyons, 1651); *Opera Omnia*, 38 vols. (Paris: Vives, 1890-1899). The Paris Edition, principally vol. 29, is used in this study.

¹⁰⁷ In *IVum Sententiarum*, Dist. XVI, a. 13, ad 9um, p. 571.

faction according to its substance, a definition which applies equally well to all satisfaction.

Satisfaction is the compensation of an inflicted damage or injustice according to the judgment and order of law, or [according to] the decision of him who suffered the injustice.¹⁰⁸

Satisfaction may also be defined as a part of the sacrament of Penance, which is the medicine of actual sin. In this sense satisfaction is defined as "the cure of the wound which it achieves in the one making satisfaction." Albert adds that this is the sense in which it is applied and defined in the text of the Sentences. To satisfy is to root out the causes of sin and not to allow entrance to their suggestions. As such, satisfaction is truly a remedy, "for the wound is healed through the fact that the causes of sins are rooted out and no further entry is allowed to [their] suggestion."¹⁰⁹

The third definition points out the recipient and the purpose or end of satisfaction.

In the third place it is defined in relation to its *finis*: for since we can neither hurt nor damage God, by sinning we take away the honor due to Him: and toward this end we make satisfaction, that the honor due to Him and previously taken away may be restored: and thus it is defined by Anselm: . . .¹¹⁰

The reference is to the definition of Saint Anselm which he has just explained: To satisfy is to return the honor due to God. Albert explicitly states that the debt of honor to be paid in satisfaction is a debt flowing from sin.¹¹¹

These definitions are really applicable to satisfaction in general. Albert makes no explicit distinction concerning extra-sacramental

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, a. 12, p. 487: "Dicendum, quod satisfactio tripliciter potest diffiniri, scilicet secundum substantiam, ut satisfactio sit damni vel injuriae illatae recompensatio secundum judicium et juris ordinem, vel arbitrium ejus cui injuria est illata."

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, ad quaestionem 2, ad 2um, p. 489.

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satisfaction in particular. Later, however, his stress on the special role of sacramental satisfaction will sufficiently delineate the goal of extra-sacramental satisfaction.

Even though Albert does not treat of satisfaction in general or extra-sacramental satisfaction, he is aware of its existence. An objection to his distinction of sacramental satisfaction from the other two parts of Penance points out that there is much satisfaction to be offered through the shame of confession. Albert answers that the objection "takes satisfaction in the wide sense (*large*) for all punishment which is borne for sins, whether it be enjoined or not; but satisfaction in its proper sense [as a part of the sacrament] is not taken for such punishment."¹¹²

SATISFACTORY WORKS

Satisfactory works, termed by Saint Albert the parts of satisfaction, are classed under prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.¹¹³ He also admits that the painful shame often sustained in the act of confession may contribute in part to the payment of punishment, but, as will be seen later, this does not make that shame sacramental satisfaction in the proper sense.¹¹⁴

EFFECT OF SATISFACTION

The principal effect of satisfaction is the removal or payment of the debt of temporal punishment during the present life, and the resultant avoidance of the exaction of that debt in purgatory, where the soul would suffer a much more serious punishment.¹¹⁵ In addition there are the medicinal effects in the curing of the remains of sin. Saint Albert declares that it is as a medicine that satisfaction roots out the causes of sin, namely, by rooting out the inclination aroused through the act and the habit of sin, the remains of past sin, and the occasions of sin.¹¹⁶

Albert also implies a meritorious effect of satisfaction. He states that to satisfy is greater than to merit, "because to merit

¹¹² *Ibid.*, a. 13, ad 2um, p. 490; cf. *ibid.*, Dist. XVI, a. 16, ad 17um, p. 579.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, a. 17 et a. 18, pp. 497-499.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Dist. XVI, a. 24, p. 594.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, a. 3, contra 2um, p. 473.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, a. 12, ad 1um-ad 7um, pp. 487-488.

implies only a work worthy (*dignum*) of eternal life, and to satisfy implies this plus the payment of punishment due."¹¹⁷

NECESSITY OF SATISFACTION

Satisfaction to God for the injustice wrought by sin always has been necessary from the natural law. The *manner* of satisfaction under the New Law (at least with regard to sacramental satisfaction) was promulgated by John the Baptist and instituted and confirmed by Jesus Christ when He commanded, "Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, that you may receive the kingdom of heaven is at hand."¹¹⁸

Saint Albert admits that Our Lord did not explicitly command satisfaction, but he holds that Christ did command man to practice that penance which brings fruits of everlasting life. Therefore He prescribed complete penance, penance which includes confession and satisfaction.

This special insistence on the promulgation and institution of the new *manner* or mode of satisfaction may demand further clarification. Albert teaches that the general reason for satisfaction is always the same: sin. He likewise insists that the recipient to whom satisfaction for sin is due remains the same: Almighty God. The state of the one making satisfaction, however, has not always been the same. Before Christ sinners offered satisfaction in a manner which prefigured the satisfaction of Christ; from the time of Christ, sinners are commanded to offer satisfaction in union with and in imitation of the satisfaction of Christ.¹¹⁹

In addition to the implicit command of Christ, the facts of sin and of the remission of sin offer explanation of the necessity of satisfaction. The underlying principle is the same: the remission of the guilt and eternal punishment of sin does not necessarily mean the remission of the debt of temporal punishment due to sin.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, a. 10, contra 2, p. 484: "Item, satisfacere plus est quam mereri: quia mereri non dicit nisi opus dignum vita aeterna, et satisfacere dicit hoc et solutionem debiti poenae."

¹¹⁸ *In IVum Sent.*, Dist. XVI, a. 20, ad quaest., p. 586; cf. *ibid.*, a. 19, ad 1um, ad 5um, pp. 583, 584.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, a. 19, p. 583.

In general, two elements are found in sin: the substance of sin itself and the state of debt (*reatus*) which follows upon sin. The substance of sin (with the debt of eternal punishment) is remitted by grace alone. The state of debt, which is a debt of punishment, is removed by the payment of the punishment.¹²⁰

To become more explicit, contrition (informed by grace) removes the entire guilt and the entire debt of eternal punishment. It may be so great in intensity that it will remove all the punishment due to sin. Generally, however, it leaves the penitent a debtor with a debt of temporal punishment.¹²¹

This debt of temporal or transitory punishment is termed purgatorial by Saint Albert. By that term he intends no confusion with the place and pains of temporal punishment to be applied after the present life. Purgatorial in this case merely indicates a similarity to those future purgatorial punishments and for two reasons: (1) this present temporal debt flows from the judgment of God; (2) it is not proportioned to the powers of man.¹²² Albert's stress on this similarity points to his teaching on sacramental satisfaction. For the present it suffices to know that satisfaction is necessary to pay that debt of temporal punishment.

POSSIBILITY OF SATISFACTION

Man is able to make satisfaction by which he pays the debt of temporal punishment due to his sin. Indeed the satisfaction man offers is not equal in justice to the injustice he inflicts against the infinite majesty of God. But man can perform the satisfaction which God demands. Albert states:

that there is a two-fold satisfaction, namely, according to the equality of law, and according to the decision of him upon whom the injustice is inflicted. It does not happen that satisfaction can be made to God in accordance with the first by any pure creature; but in accordance with the second it does happen, because that can be paid to God for sin which He demands of us.¹²³

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, a. 4, ad quaest. 3, ad Ium, p. 475.
¹²¹ *Ibid.*, Dist. XVI, a. 31, p. 613.

¹²² *Ibid.*, Dist. XVIII, a. 11, ad Ium, p. 784.
¹²³ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, a. 11, pp. 485-486: "Dicendum, quod duplex est satis-

All of man's satisfaction draws its value from the satisfaction of Christ. The debt of sin is greater than man can pay. Christ has paid what would otherwise exceed the power of man even aided by grace. By the merits of Christ, man is able to make satisfaction for the debt which remains.¹²⁴ This fact is particularly evident in the case of sacramental satisfaction. The parts of Penance so apply the merits of Christ to penitents that the debt can be paid by them, again in union with Christ's merits. Albert adds explicitly that Saint Ambrose, Saint Anselm, and Peter Lombard had shown

that no penance of ours would suffice, unless the merit of Christ were supporting [it]: there is, however, no reason why our penance does not suffice, except that we are debtors of more than we can pay: and this is the disproportion of the power to pay in us: and Christ paid this for us: therefore . . . the Passion of Christ which is operative in the keys, has effect against that measure of punishment which exceeds our strength.¹²⁵

CONDITIONS

The first condition of all satisfaction is the acceptance of God. This means that satisfaction must be made according to the divine will and acceptance.¹²⁶

In order to satisfy, man needs the present life and the state of grace. As long as this life continues there is place for correction and for penance; after this life the time of satisfaction is closed.¹²⁷

factio, scilicet secundum aequale juris, et secundum arbitrium ejus cui facta est injuria. De prima satisfactione non contingit satisfacere Deo ab aliqua creatura pura: sed de secunda contingit, quia contingit Deo solvere pro peccato quod exigit a nobis." Cf. *ibid.*, Dist. XVI, a. 20, p. 585.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, Dist. XVI, a. 19, p. 583; cf. *ibid.*, a. 16, ad 17um, p. 579.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, Dist. XVIII, a. 11, ratio 4, pp. 783-784: ". . . quod nulla poenitentia nostra sufficeret, nisi esset meritum Christi coadjuvans: quod autem non sufficit poenitentia nostra, nulla causa est nisi quod majoris quam solvere possumus debitores sumus: et haec est improprio potentiae solvendi in nobis: et hoc pro nobis solvit Christus: ergo . . . passio Christi quae in clavibus operatur, habet effectum contra illum modum poenae, qui excedit vires nostras." Cf. *ibid.*, rationes 1-3, p. 783.

¹²⁶ *In IVum Sent.*, Dist. XV, a. 10, p. 484.
¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, a. 4, quaestio 5, 2; ad quaestionem 5, pp. 475, 476.

Man also needs the state of grace and charity in order to satisfy. In the first place, Albert brands as false and condemns as contrary to faith the opinion which would hold that man can satisfy for one sin while clinging to another.¹²⁸ Moreover, Christ has no communication with the devil and hence no communication with the soul in which the devil dwells. The soul in mortal sin, however, is the dwelling place of the devil; hence Christ has no communication with such a soul. Since Christ accepts no satisfaction except from a soul with whom He is joined in grace, He will not accept the satisfaction of a soul remaining in mortal sin.¹²⁹

The passage just cited refers to all acts of penance. Albert repeats the principle as applicable to satisfaction in particular. He asks the question: Does the penitent making satisfaction need *gratia gratum faciens* in order to satisfy? His answer is forceful and clear:

This question was almost determined, where it was asked concerning works performed without charity, whether they could be works of penance: and therefore what was answered there is supposed here, namely, that works of penance, just as other works in which the pleasure (*placatio*) of God is sought, be performed according to the divine will and acceptance; the acceptance of God, however, is not in us of ourselves, nor in our work of ourselves or of our work, but rather from that which we have received from Him: and that is *gratum faciens*: and therefore such works must be performed in *gratia gratum facienti*.¹³⁰

The necessity of grace for satisfaction is apparent also from the fact that man must be pleasing to God in order to secure the remission of the temporal punishment due to his sin.¹³¹

Grace is likewise necessary for the performance of assigned sacramental satisfaction. Albert admits, however, that where a penitent fulfills the sacramental satisfaction enjoined upon him,

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, a. 1, p. 471.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, Sed Contra, 1, p. 470.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, a. 10, p. 484; cf. *ibid.*, Sed Contra, 1-2; a. 11, ad 3um, p. 486.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, a. 9, p. 481; cf. *ibid.*, a. 35, p. 521.

fulfills it, that is, while in the state of mortal sin, "he need not perform it again after he has repented." Such a penitent frees himself from the obligation placed upon him by the priest; quantitatively he pays the debt of punishment. Such a one, however, does not make satisfaction: "because payment regards only the quantity of the debt, but satisfaction regards this [quantity], and further affirms that it be performed according to the will of him to whom it is made." Hence even though the penitent in such a case need not repeat the previously assigned satisfaction, "nevertheless he must be sorry, and confess, and make satisfaction for the fact that he did not perform the enjoined [penance] in that manner in which he should have [performed it]."¹³²

Albert the Great admits the revival of sacramental satisfaction performed by a penitent in the state of mortal sin, but only in those cases in which the satisfactory works leave an effect in the penitent. Other works which pass away as soon as they are completed do not revive; therefore the debt of temporal punishment remains and satisfaction must be made for it. Albert makes his distinction concerning satisfactory works in these words:

... there are certain exterior works, which through loss (*damnum*) and affliction remain in the performer after they have been completed, such as the giving of alms, and pilgrimage, and the like; certain ones, however, completely pass away, such as prayer, and other similar works. Therefore I say, that works which remain in some measure (*modo*), revive afterwards through grace: and those need not be repeated: but others must be repeated.¹³³

There are conditions on the part of the work offered as satisfaction also. Satisfaction must be free or voluntary, because "punishment purges sin in so far as it is voluntarily assumed for sin."¹³⁴ Moreover, Albert distinguishes between satisfaction in this life and purgation in purgatory by pointing out the

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *Ibid.*, a. 30, p. 514; cf. *ibid.*, Dist. XIV, a. 20, p. 440; a. 21, pp. 441-442.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, a. 4, ad quaestionem 3, ad 2um, p. 476; cf. *ibid.*, a. 3, ad 2um,

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former as *simpliciter* voluntary and the latter as conditionally
voluntary.¹³⁵

From what has been said, it likewise follows that the satisfactory work must be a good work: for it must be pleasing to God. Its supernatural character seems to follow from the fact that it is directed to repair the injustice committed against God, and that it depends for its value upon the support of the merits of Christ. Numerous instances of satisfaction as a punishment point to the penal character of the satisfactory work. Albert explicitly points out that the three parts of satisfaction are distinct, "although they share one thing in common, which is a penal aspect (*esse poenale*)."¹³⁶

SACRAMENTAL SATISFACTION

The parts of the sacrament of Penance are contrition, confession, and satisfaction.¹³⁷ Saint Albert proves their necessity by a consideration of the facts of sin and the role played by these parts in the remission of sin.

Penance is a sacrament directed to the total destruction of actual sin: "the actual disease, however, is not only the guilt, but also the debt (*reatas*) following the guilt, and the difficulty toward good generated from the habit and dispositions of sin." The debt which follows sin is a debt of punishment which is three-fold: the debt of eternal punishment, the debt of disproportioned temporal punishment, the debt of proportioned temporal punishment. In Albert's own terms:

The consequent debt, however, is three-fold: for one is joined to the guilt, which is the debt of eternal punishment: and when that is loosed there still remains the debt of purgatorial punishment disproportioned to the powers of the penitent. When the latter is remitted, there again remains the debt of expiatory punishment determined according to the measure of guilt and the powers of the penitent. When this last has been re-

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, Dist. XXI, a. 7, et ad lum, p. 871.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, a. 18, p. 498.

¹³⁷ *In IVam Sent.*, Dist. XVI, a. 2, pp. 542-543; a. 44, ad lum, p. 634; Dist. XVII, a. 1, p. 660; Dist. XXII, a. 5, p. 893.

mitted, however, there remains no debt, but the difficulty in doing good can still remain.

The three parts of Penance (*partes potestativae*) are required for the total destruction of sin and hence for the perfection of Penance.

But in order to remove this entire disease of sin I say that three things are required, namely, contrition remitting the first, confession remitting the second, and satisfaction remitting the third: the difficulty [toward good], however, is removed by the habit of good in all these [three]. And thus it is clear that the power of Penance is perfected in these three, and without these three it is not perfect.¹³⁸

Lest it be concluded that all three parts of Penance fulfill the particular role of satisfaction, Saint Albert clearly distinguishes sacramental satisfaction from contrition and confession. In relation to the sacrament of Penance,

not everything which in some measure looses the guilt or the punishment due to the guilt is here called satisfaction, but only that [punishment] which is enjoined and determined by the power of the keys and through the decision of the priest; for that punishment is *simpliciter* voluntary and enjoined according to the quantity of the crime. But in contrition and confession, there are punishments, namely, sorrow in contrition and shame in confession, which are punishments from corrupt nature inflicted for sin, [and which] are neither determined, nor limited to a definite time, but [which], as long as discreet and reasonable submission is present, increase in value according as they are greater. Therefore although sin is expiated through them, nevertheless they are not properly satisfactory according to the judgment and decision of the confessional forum.¹³⁹

Therefore contrition (informed by grace) removes the guilt and eternal punishment due to sin. The power of the keys as

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, Dist. XVI, a. 2, pp. 542-543; cf. *ibid.*, a. 12, ad 3um, p. 567; Dist. XXII, a. 6, p. 895.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, a. 13, p. 489.

applied in confession changes the debt of disproportioned purgatorial punishment to an expiatory punishment proportioned to the powers of the penitent and assigns that determined punishment to be paid through sacramental satisfaction. Sacramental satisfaction is required to pay this debt of determined and enjoined temporal punishment.¹⁴⁰

Satisfaction *in voto* is always required for the forgiveness of sin, even in those cases in which actual satisfaction is impossible. Albert distinguishes a two-fold action of the parts of Penance: *in virtute* and *in essentia*. Then he continues concerning the necessity of contrition, confession, and satisfaction:

And it is indeed true, that those three are not always required *essentialiter* for the remission of every sin even alone does not remit sin, but as it is joined with the *votum* of confession and satisfaction: and then confession and satisfaction are present *in virtute* and not *in essentia*; and this suffices when a moment of necessity and not contempt of religion excludes the sacrament.¹⁴¹

Actual satisfaction, as is evident from Albert's teaching, supposes contrition and confession.¹⁴² Indeed confession "is made to the minister of the Church, in order that he may know how great and what is the guilt, [and] that thus he may enjoin due punishment."¹⁴³

Saint Albert's very notion of sacramental satisfaction includes the injunction of proportioned punishment. He expressly states that fruits worthy of penance are those in which the quality and quantity of the punishment are proportioned to the quality and quantity of the sin.¹⁴⁴

The quantity of the sin is to be discovered by weighing the seriousness of each sin and the total number of sins, and also the circumstances of the sinner and of the act which may make

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Dist. XVIII, rationes 1-4, p. 783; cf. *ibid.*, Dist. XVI, a. 16, ad 17um, p. 579; Dist. XVII, a. 24, p. 693; a. 28, p. 697.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, a. 40, ad 2um, p. 527.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, Dist. XVI, a. 4, ad 5um, p. 546.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, a. 9, p. 481; cf. *ibid.*, Dist. XVI, a. 12, ad quaest.

ad 5um, p. 569.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Dist. XVI, a. 21, p. 587.

a sin grave.¹⁴⁵ The quality of the sin is discovered from its type whence it will be carnal or spiritual or a combination of both.¹⁴⁶

Hence the rule calls for a greater punishment for a greater guilt. The penance assigned should also be proportioned to the quality or kind of sin, so that the work of satisfaction enjoined is contrary to the vice which induced the most dangerous occasion of sin in the penitent. Thus, fasting should be enjoined on the lascivious, prayer on the proud, and almsgiving on the miserly.¹⁴⁷ In this way satisfaction fulfills its medicinal as well as its penal aspect.

Besides weighing the quantity and quality of the sin, the priest must also consider the state of the penitent. The fruits worthy of penance will be different for a cleric, a prelate, a subject.¹⁴⁸ The priest as confessor, therefore, is not bound to enjoin the penance in absolute correspondence with the canon of penance or the quality of the crime. Rather should he consider the canon as a rule for enjoining penance, "but the proportion of this rule to this penitent or that is left to the decision of the prudent priest."¹⁴⁹ Just as a physician adapts the rules of his medical books, so the priest adapts the rules of penance to each penitent.

Albert would also include the depth of contrition as a point of consideration in weighing the state of the penitent. He adds this in a text which summarizes his entire view of proportioned satisfaction. In addition to the quantity of the crime the priest must note the quality of the sin, the depth of contrition, and the state of the penitent.¹⁵⁰

Albert's stress on the necessity of sacramental satisfaction implies that the penitent should accept and fulfil the penance enjoined by the priest. Such is certainly true in regard to acceptance: for the willing assumption of the enjoined penance by the penitent is made a sign of true contrition.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, ad quaestionem 1, p. 588.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, ad lum et ad 2um, p. 587; ad quaestionem 2, p. 588.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, a. 12, ad 7um, p. 488; Dist. XVI, a. 21, ad lum et 2um, pp. 587-588.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, Dist. XVI, a. 21, p. 587.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, a. 45, pp. 635-636.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Dist. XX, a. 14, p. 845.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, a. 36, ad quaestionem 2, ad 3um, p. 524.

The necessity of confession and satisfaction except in case of impossibility has already been mentioned. Albert here limits that necessity to cases of mortal sin. The rules of Penance, according as Penance is "integrated and constituted by contrition, confession, and satisfaction . . ." always apply to mortal sin, but not to venial sin:

because in mortal sin is demanded confession with the listing of the aggravating circumstances, and with enjoined satisfaction, none of which is required in penance for venial sins, but only sorrow with daily satisfaction.¹⁵²

The notable exception to the rule of enjoined satisfaction is the case of the dying. The priest should not enjoin, but he should make known the satisfaction due in order that the sick man may know the quantity of his guilt and be more deeply contrite. At the same time the priest should encourage the penitent with the recollection of the mercy of God Who forgives with equal facility many sins or few; thus he will preserve the dying man from despair.¹⁵³

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS (1225-1274)

Thomas Aquinas was born at Rocca Secca near Naples, probably in the early part of the year 1225. Landolph, his father, was Count of Aquino and Theodora, his mother, was Countess of Teano. The family was thus rich in royal ties.

Shortly after reaching his fifth year, Thomas was sent to the Benedictine monks at Monte Cassino to begin his schooling. So great was his prowess that he was later sent, on the advice of the Abbot, to the University of Naples to study philosophy.

Some time between 1240 and 1244 Thomas entered the Order of Preachers. The story of his family's opposition and attempts to weaken his resolve is well known.

Thomas is reported to have arrived in Cologne to study in 1244 or 1245. He was certainly in Paris studying in the latter year. In 1248, when St. Albert the Great was transferred to

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, Dist. XVI, a. 47, p. 641.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, Dist. XX, a. 15, p. 847.

Cologne as the Regent of the new Dominican *Studium Generale*, Thomas accompanied his professor. He himself was assigned to teach in Cologne as a Bachelor. In 1250, Thomas was ordained to the sacred priesthood by Conrad of Hochstaden, Archbishop of Cologne.

The public career of Thomas Aquinas really began in 1251 or 1252 when he was appointed Sub-regent of the Dominican *Studium* in Paris. His lectures, principally explanatory of the Sentences of Peter Lombard, soon attracted both professors and students. Until recent years, tradition had maintained that St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure received the doctorate in theology together on October 23, 1257. But later scholarship has indicated that St. Bonaventure attained his degree in 1253.¹⁵⁴

From this point the life of Thomas was one of constant prayer and labor. His teaching assignments took him at various times to Anagni, Orvieto, Bologna, Perugia, Rome, Viterbo, back to Paris, and finally to Naples to found a *Studium Generale* there. During these years of teaching he succeeded in declining the Archbishopric of Naples to which Clement IV had appointed him in 1265.

He ceased writing on December 6, 1273, after an unusually long ecstasy during Holy Mass. At the time he had completed his *Summa Theologica* only as far as the ninetyth question of the Third Part.

Invited by Pope Gregory X to the General Council at Lyons, Thomas tried to summon his strength for the journey. He set out in January, 1274, but fell sick on the way near Terracina. His death came at the Cistercian Monastery in Fossa Nuova on March 7, 1274.

Pope John XXII canonized Thomas on July 18, 1323. Pope St. Pius V, in 1567, proclaimed St. Thomas a Doctor of the Universal Church. In 1880, Pope Leo XIII designated St. Thomas the patron of Catholic universities, colleges, academies, and schools.

The most famous of all the writings of St. Thomas is the *Summa Theologica*. But since St. Thomas did not complete his

¹⁵⁴ E. Longpré, "Bonaventure (Saint)," *DHGE*, IX (1937), 748-749.

treatment of the sacrament of Penance in the Third Part, it will be useful to refer to his *Commentary on the Four Books of Sentences*. In that we will be following a precedent established by those who compiled the Supplement to the *Summa*.

NATURE OF SATISFACTION

Penance is a virtue which has as its special purpose to satisfy for committed personal sin. As a virtue, penance is specified by the consideration of sin as detestable and as capable of expiation through penance.¹⁵⁵ Hence its object is committed personal sin which it intends to expiate. The end of penance, however, is God with Whom it intends reconciliation.¹⁵⁶

Penance is a moral virtue because it follows a mean—the equality of proportion to be restored between the offender and the one offended. It does not punish some sins and allow others to go unpunished. But for each sin penance inflicts on the offender the punishment due for the offense he has committed. Thus, in some sense, the one offended has previously had something taken away from him by the offense; in penance he has that something restored while the offender gives up what he has indulged himself in the offense.¹⁵⁷

From what has been said it follows that penance pertains to vindictive justice. Between God and man, because the distance is infinite, there cannot be any strict equality of justice, but there is some mode (*modus*) of justice according to similarity. Man becomes God's debtor by sinning. Man pays that debt through penance. His payment does not equalize the preceding offense exactly, but it is what he can do. Hence penance, while not a species of justice, is a potential part of justice.¹⁵⁸

While both penance and vindictive justice are in some way concerned with the same task, namely, the punishment of an offense, they differ in two respects. Vindictive justice is properly found in the judge who inflicts the penalty which is sometimes

¹⁵⁵ In *Librum IVum Sententiarum*, Dist. XIV, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 3.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, sol. 4.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, ad 4um.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, sol. 5.

unwillingly received by the guilty party. Penance resides in the guilty person himself who voluntarily sustains punishment for the committed guilt. In the second place, vindictive justice deals with offenses in general. The virtue of penance deals only with an offense against God. Therefore penance must consist in the voluntarily assumed emendation of the offense and be such as is fitting to God.¹⁵⁹

Because God sees the heart of the offender as well as his exterior, penance must begin in the heart. External recompense for a preceding offense can well be made through the acceptance and the suffering of punishment for the offense and the avoidance of a relapse into the offense. In the case of an offense against God this recompense must begin in the heart through sorrow for the offense committed and the firm resolution to avoid repeating its commission in the future.¹⁶⁰

St. Thomas views satisfaction as an act of the virtue of penance. Being an act of penance, satisfaction is therefore a work of justice. Ordinarily justice aims at the equality of one thing to another according to some certain proportion. As the term itself signifies, satisfaction indicates the equality of proportion and therefore certainly pertains to justice.¹⁶¹

Sometimes justice, administered through a judge, sets up the equality between two individuals; but justice as secured in satisfaction sets up the equality in the performer of satisfaction. This equality may be secured in regard to exterior things, and as such is exemplified by restitution. It may, however, be concerned with actions, and thus properly is the field of satisfaction.

Because satisfaction sets up equality in regard to actions, it presupposes the inequality of actions which constitutes the offense or injustice. Hence satisfaction looks to a preceding offense. The fact that satisfaction looks toward that preceding offense stamps it as a work of vindictive justice, which alone regards the past.

All this is aptly summed up in the definition which St. Thomas

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, sol. 6.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 1 and 2.

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offers: "... satisfaction is a certain recompense of an inflicted injustice."¹⁶²

Justice does not merely remove the preceding inequality by punishing the preceding fault (*culpa*), but it tends also to preserve that equality in the future: for, according to Aristotle, punishments are medicines. From this it follows that satisfaction, which is an act of justice inflicting punishment, is a medicine curing past sins and preserving from future sins.¹⁶³

Having declared these two aspects of satisfaction, St. Thomas proceeds to approve the definitions of satisfaction given by St. Anselm and Gennadius. In regard to the preceding fault which it cures by compensating for it, satisfaction "is the recompense of an inflicted injustice according to the equality of justice." This is what St. Anselm taught when he stated that to satisfy is to return the honor due to God, that is, the honor due by reason of the preceding offense. Satisfaction may also be defined with special emphasis on preservation from future guilt. In this sense Gennadius held that satisfaction is to root out the causes of sin and to deny entrance to their suggestions. By rooting out the causes of sin, satisfaction removes the proximate sources of sin; by closing the heart to suggestions of sin, satisfaction secures the power of free will against sin.¹⁶⁴

SATISFACTORY WORKS

Because satisfaction both makes recompense for a past offense and also preserves from future guilt, it must be made through penal works. The recompense for the offense implies an equalization to be made by the offender toward the one offended. On the human plane this equality of justice is attained by subtracting from the offender who has more than is just and by adding to the one offended from whom something has been previously taken. Now it is certain that God, on His part, cannot suffer any subtraction as a result of man's dealings with God; yet the sinner, so far as in him lies, does take something away from

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, sol. 2, ad 1um: "... satisfactio . . . est quaedam injuriarum illatarum recompensatio."

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, sol. 3.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

God by sinning. In order that recompense may be made for this subtraction, something must be taken away from the sinner through satisfaction, which procures the honor of God. A good work, as such, would not take something away from a sinner, but would rather perfect him; hence a good work cannot provide the satisfaction, unless it be penal. Hence a satisfactory work as good is in honor of God, as penal it subtracts something from the sinner. On the preservative side, the sinner is not so likely to return to sins from which he has suffered punishment.¹⁶⁵

The trials of life which God sends or allows to come to men can be satisfactory if those trials become in some way the trials of him who suffers them, if he accepts them patiently.¹⁶⁶

Ordinarily, however, there are three classes of works through which man can offer satisfaction, three classes which correspond to the three classes of goods which man can subtract from himself in honor of God: goods of the soul, goods of the body, and goods of fortune. From goods of fortune man can make satisfaction through almsgiving; from corporal goods he can satisfy through fasting; from goods of the soul, while he does not subtract anything from himself, man satisfies by submitting them totally to God through prayer.¹⁶⁷

EFFECT OF SATISFACTION

Satisfaction performed through these three classes of satisfactory works achieves the remission of the temporal punishment due to already forgiven sin. Once again it is declared to be the means of avoiding purgatory, where the unpaid debt of temporal punishment would otherwise be exacted in much more painful torments.¹⁶⁸

St. Thomas has already indicated that satisfaction likewise has a medicinal effect in so far as it cures past sins and preserves from future sins.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 1.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, sol. 2.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, sol. 3.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Dist. XXI, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 1.

NECESSITY OF SATISFACTION

It can be inferred from what has been seen of the doctrine of St. Thomas that satisfaction is necessary *both* as a punishment of previous sin and as a preservative medicine against future falls. But St. Thomas explicitly states that the command of God is the source of the necessity of satisfaction: Bring forth fruits befitting repentance.¹⁶⁹

The basis for the necessity of satisfaction, however, is the persistence of a debt of temporal punishment even after the remission of the guilt of sin and of the debt of eternal punishment.

This persistence does not argue any deficiency in the merits of Christ. For in the sacrament of regeneration, in which the full force of Christ's death is applied to the soul, all debts of sin are removed.

... Christ through His death satisfied sufficiently for the sins of the entire human race even though they should be much more numerous. And because man through Baptism is baptized into the death of Christ, and dies and is buried with Him, as stated in the sixth chapter of Romans, accordingly Baptism, on its part, applies the whole efficacy of the passion to the one baptized; and on this account it absolves not only from the guilt, but also from satisfactory punishment.¹⁷⁰

In the sacrament of Penance, however, the sinner participates in the value of the passion of Christ according to his own acts which are the matter of Penance. Accordingly the debt of punishment is not entirely loosed by the very first act of Penance, which indeed is able to achieve the remission of guilt, but only with the completion of all the acts of Penance.¹⁷¹ Baptism is a spiritual regeneration of man. Penance, however, is not a regeneration, but rather a reparation of a life previously possessed.¹⁷² In that reparation of spiritual life man, who destroyed it by the commission of sin, must cooperate.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, q. 1, a. 2.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, Dist. IV, q. 2, a. 1, sol. 2.

¹⁷¹ *Summa Theologica*, III, q. 86, a. 4, ad 3um; cf. *In Librum IVum*,

Dist. XIV, q. 2, a. 1, sol. 3.

¹⁷² *In Librum IVum*, Dist. XIV, q. 2, a. 1, sol. 2, ad 3um.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, Dist. XVII, q. 3, a. 1, sol. 1, ad 3um.

The persistence of temporal punishment even after the remission of guilt and of eternal punishment receives its classic explanation from St. Thomas. In every mortal sin there are two elements: aversion from the unchangeable good and the inordinate conversion to some changeable good. To the aversion from the unchangeable good or God a debt of eternal punishment corresponds, "in order that he who has sinned against the eternal good may be eternally punished." From the conversion to changeable good, in so far as it is inordinate, there flows a debt of some other punishment, because the deordination of guilt is only reduced to the order of justice through punishment. It is not, however, a debt of eternal punishment, because the conversion is only finite. This latter fact accounts for the single debt of temporal punishment in the case of venial sin in which there is no aversion from God.

When grace removes the guilt of mortal sin, it removes the aversion from God inherent in that sin by joining the soul to God. Consequently grace also removes the debt of eternal punishment due to that aversion. But such grace does not necessarily remove the punishment corresponding to the inordinate conversion to changeable good. Hence a debt of temporal punishment can and does remain even after such forgiveness.¹⁷⁴

Satisfaction is the means at the sinner's disposal for remitting that debt of temporal punishment.

POSSIBILITY OF SATISFACTION

The sinner can make satisfaction to God and thus pay the debt which he has contracted by reason of the sin committed. If satisfaction were to imply the absolute equality of quantity, so that the punishment undergone would absolutely equal the offense previously committed, man would not be able to satisfy. But since satisfaction demands only an equality of proportion, man is able to make satisfaction. The case is not strange either. Man is also a debtor to God for the gifts he has received from God. In offering worship and thanksgiving to God, man cannot offer

¹⁷⁴ *Summa Theologica*, III, q. 86, a. 4; *ibid.*, ad 1um; cf. *In Librum IVum*, Dist. XIV, q. 2, a. 1, sol. 2.

a quantity exactly equivalent to the benefits received from God. But it is sufficient that man do what he can: friendship only demands an equivalent according to what is possible. That same notion applies to satisfaction.¹⁷⁵

It is true that the offense resulting from mortal sin has a certain infinity by reason of the infinite majesty of God Who is offended, but satisfaction also has a certain infinity proceeding from the infinite mercy of God, according as satisfaction is informed by grace by which man's offering is made acceptable. St. Thomas, as mentioned in the study of the doctrine of St. Bonaventure, rejects as "nothing" the opinion which holds that satisfaction can be made only for the finite conversion to created good and not for the infinite aversion from God. He further declares that the view which holds that man can make satisfaction for sin in virtue of the infinite merits of Christ is identical with his own statement of the solution: "through faith in their Mediator, grace is given to believers."¹⁷⁶

In the argument just offered, St. Thomas seems to be speaking about the satisfaction made for sin in general or about the entire process of complete reconciliation with God. He expressly states that satisfaction can be made both for the infinite aversion from God, whence comes the real offense, and for the finite conversion to created good. Yet we have seen that the real, though not necessarily exclusive, basis for strict satisfaction is the debt of temporal punishment flowing from the inordinate conversion to creatures. It is logical, however, to say that what applies to the ensemble of Penance applies also to strict satisfaction. Indeed it is only because grace remits sin and eternal punishment through the infinite merits of Christ that man can make satisfaction for the debt of temporal punishment.

CONDITIONS

The primary condition of all satisfaction is that it be acceptable to God.¹⁷⁷

On the part of man, two conditions are required: temporal life

¹⁷⁵ *In Librum IVum*, Dist. XV, q. 1, a. 2, sol.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, ad Ium, ad 3um; cf. *ibid.*, Dist. XIV, q. 2, a. 1, sol. 1, ad 4um.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, q. 1, a. 3.

and the state of grace and charity. The first follows the general teaching that the time of penance closes with the completion of man's probation on earth.¹⁷⁸

The possession of grace and charity is essential because through such possession alone can works of satisfaction be acceptable to God. St. Thomas repeats the arguments which have been found in almost all his predecessors. Satisfaction in general must be for all mortal sins without exception: satisfaction must remove a preceding offense and hence must be apt for that task. The removal of the offense, however, is also the restoration of friendship. Therefore, since a single mortal sin impedes the restoration of friendship between sinner and God, man cannot make satisfaction for one mortal sin while he remains fixed in another mortal sin.¹⁷⁹

Therefore, sin is an impediment to satisfactory works—in other words, actual satisfaction presupposes grace.¹⁸⁰ This fact appears more clearly in the discussion of the penitent who, after having his sins remitted, falls into another mortal sin before completing his satisfaction. St. Thomas states that such a penitent does not make satisfaction and that the penal works he performs are of no value to him. Because "in satisfaction it is necessary that after friendship has been restored, the equality of justice be also restored." This equality in satisfaction is not a strict objective equivalent, but rather the equality of proportion according to the acceptance of God. "Hence it is necessary, even when the offense has already been removed through previous contrition, that the satisfactory works [themselves] be acceptable to God, which [quality] charity bestows upon them; and therefore without charity works are not satisfactory."¹⁸¹

St. Thomas regards it as obvious that there is no merit to be gained by works performed in the state of mortal sin. In the treatment of St. Bonaventure, however, we saw that the Seraphic Doctor viewed as probable the opinion which allowed such works performed without charity to revive with the return of charity,

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, Dist. XX, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 1.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, q. 1, a. 3, sol. 1.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, Dist. XVI, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 2, ad 3um.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, q. 1, a. 3, sol. 2.

but only in so far as they were satisfactory and not as meritorious. Bonaventure himself held it was more secure to deny even this limited revival. St. Thomas here denies the very possibility. Such works do not revive even as satisfactory. Both the meritorious and the satisfactory value of works performed in charity comes from the same fountain—the fact that they are acceptable to God. Hence the return of charity, which cannot render dead works meritorious, has no power to make dead works satisfactory—such works are simply not acceptable to God.¹⁸²

To this hard and fast rule St. Thomas makes one exception. Those penal works performed without charity which leave some effect in the performer and to the degree in which those works remain can be revived. Those which entirely pass away must be repeated. These are the words of St. Thomas:

... there are some satisfactions from which some effect remains in the performers, even after the act of satisfaction passes away; just as from fasting the weakening of the body remains, from the giving of alms the decrease of possessions, and so on in like cases; and it is not necessary that such satisfaction performed in the state of sin be repeated; because through penance and in the degree that an effect remains from them, they are acceptable to God. But satisfactions which do not leave any effect in the performer after the act passes away, must be repeated, as in the case with prayer and similar acts.¹⁸³

Hence Thomas follows his teacher, Albert the Great: only those satisfactory works performed in sin which leave an effect in the performer can be revived with the return of charity. Those which completely pass away must be repeated.

Thomas demands other conditions on the part of the act of satisfaction. It must be free, that is, it must be voluntarily assumed or at least patiently accepted. Of its very nature an act of penance is a human act. It must therefore proceed from the

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, sol. 3.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, ad 3um.

will.¹⁸⁴ The satisfactory act must also be good; otherwise it will not be for the honor of God.¹⁸⁵

A satisfactory work needs the "help of God," the help of actual grace.¹⁸⁶ For while "the remission of guilt, and of the debt of eternal punishment pertains to operating grace (*gratiam operantem*)," yet the "remission of the debt of temporal punishment pertains to cooperating grace (*gratiam cooperantem*), namely, in so far as man by patiently bearing punishments with the help of divine grace, is absolved also from the debt of temporal punishment."¹⁸⁷

Finally, the work of satisfaction must be penal. As we have seen, only through this penal aspect can something be taken away from the sinner; especially through such penalty will the sinner be deterred from the repetition of his sin.¹⁸⁸ Just as the difficulty of a work is considered in the question of merit, so the penal character of a work is weighed in satisfaction. Other things being equal, the diminution of the difficulty will decrease the merit and similarly the lessening of the penal aspect will decrease the satisfactory value. It should be noted, however, that where the penalty is not diminished objectively but only through promptness of the will inspired by charity, the satisfactory value is not only not lessened but is actually increased.¹⁸⁹

VICARIOUS SATISFACTION

By reason of the bond of charity existing among the faithful, one person can satisfy for another so far as the debt of punishment is concerned. But the medicinal aspect of satisfaction can profit only the sinner for whom it is intended. To gain that benefit the sinner must offer the satisfaction himself. As a result of these two observations it follows that one person may be allowed to satisfy for the debt of another quite readily, but where the satisfaction is needed also as a remedy, only some kind of

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2um.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, a. 4, sol. 1.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, a. 1, sol. 3, ad 2um.

¹⁸⁷ *Sacra Theologia*, III, q. 86, a. 4, ad 2um.

¹⁸⁸ *In Librum IIum*, Dist. XV, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 1.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, ad 2um.

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impossibility will permit such vicarious satisfaction. As St. Thomas states it:

Nor is it further demanded that he for whom satisfaction is made, be incapable of making satisfaction: because even if he were capable, while another satisfies for him, he would be free from the debt. But that [incapability] is required in so far as satisfactory punishment is remedial: whence it is not to be permitted that one person make satisfaction for another, unless some defect appears in the penitent; either a corporal [defect], through which he is powerless to sustain; or a spiritual one, through which he is not disposed to bear the punishment.¹⁹⁰

Where a second person makes satisfaction in place of the sinner himself, a greater penalty should not be exacted. St. Thomas does not hold, as Alexander of Hales and St. Bonaventure did, that one's own pains are more satisfactory than those of another. In fact, by reason of the charity with which the second person assumes the added penalty, the satisfaction he offers may be of greater value; in such a case even a smaller penance could therefore suffice.

SACRAMENTAL SATISFACTION

The matter of the sacrament of Penance is made up of human acts, which acts are called the parts of Penance: contrition, confession, satisfaction. Their necessity appears from the consideration of the purpose of Penance: a recompense to remove the offense of preceding guilt. This recompense is perfected in three steps.

The first is displeasure over the past guilt; otherwise one would not proceed to recompensation willingly; and this is perfected through contrition. The second is that [the sinner] make known his guilt to God through the priest; otherwise he would not offer himself unto recompense according to the judgment of Him against Whom he sinned; and this is confession. The third is that [the

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, Dist. XX, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 3.

sinner] make compensation according to the judgment of the priest; and in this regard it is satisfaction.¹⁹¹

As is evident from the foregoing, the penitent himself supplies the matter in the sacrament of Penance. To the priest pertains "the consummation of those acts through absolution and the injunction of punishment."¹⁹²

Satisfaction *in voto* is absolutely essential to the sacrament of Penance and is always required even when actual satisfaction is impossible. The reason for this requirement is that satisfaction *in voto* is a part of true contrition without which there is no forgiveness.¹⁹³ Actual satisfaction is an integral part of the sacrament and is necessary in every case in which it is not rendered impossible.¹⁹⁴ Its sacramental nature is derived from the injunction of the confessor, the dispenser of the sacrament.

The situation faced by the priest is as follows. The penitent, freed from the guilt of mortal sin and the debt of eternal punishment, must still meet the debt of temporal punishment due to his sin. If no further step were taken, this debt would be exacted later in purgatory. That debt, moreover, is out of all proportion to the capacity of the penitent on earth. But through the power of the keys that debt is diminished in such a way as to become proportioned to human strength; as a consequence man can pay the debt in this life through satisfaction.¹⁹⁵

As has been previously noted, this temporal punishment is demanded for two reasons: in order to punish the preceding fault and to offer a remedy preserving from future guilt. These ends must be kept in mind by the confessor in assigning satisfaction.¹⁹⁶

The basic principle calls for a proportioned satisfaction. In order to remit the debt, punishment must be proportioned to

¹⁹¹ *In Librum IV^{um}*, Dist. XVI, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 2; cf. *Summa Theologica*, III, q. 90, a. 2.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, ad 1^{um}.

¹⁹³ *Summa Theologica*, III, q. 90, a. 2, ad 1^{um}.

¹⁹⁴ *In Librum IV^{um}*, Dist. XVI, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 3; cf. *ibid.*, Dist. XVII, q. 3, a. 3, sol. 2, ad 1^{um}.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, Dist. XVII, q. 3, a. 5, sol. 2.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, Dist. XX, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 1; cf. *ibid.*, Dist. XIV, q. 2, a. 1, sol. 2, ad 2^{um}.

the guilt of the sin: the quantity of the atonement must be proportioned to the quantity of the sin. Yet that proportion will be affected by the depth of contrition in the penitent, by the shame of confession, and by the power of absolution. It stands to reason that the more punishment suffered in contrition, for example, the less remains for satisfaction to accomplish. Indeed contrition, both as supernatural displeasure of the will over sin and as sensible sorrow excited by the will, may be so deep as to remove all the temporal punishment due to sin.¹⁹⁷ That fact, however, would not remove the obligation of confession and satisfaction for two reasons: (1) man cannot be certain that his contrition was sufficient to remove all punishment; (2) both confession and satisfaction are matters of precept and their omission would constitute a transgression.¹⁹⁸ It is important to note also that one of the effects of confession is the remission of part of the punishment due.¹⁹⁹ The very shame involved in confession and the power of the keys applied therein also aid in the expiation of the temporal punishment.²⁰⁰

The attention demanded of the confessor is not yet completed. The priest in the confessional must not only weigh the quantity of the punishment which he intends to enjoin, but also its power in so far as it is a part of the sacrament.²⁰¹ The mere quantity of punishment due to sin could be assigned by one who does not possess priestly powers. But the sacramental character of the punishment is what makes it valuable:

for satisfaction would not suffice for the expiation of the punishment of sin from the quantity of punishment which is imposed in satisfaction; but it does suffice in so far as it is a part of the sacrament, having sacramental power (*virtutem*); and therefore it is necessary that it be imposed through the dispensers of the sacraments, and hence confession is necessary.²⁰²

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, Dist. XVII, q. 2, a. 5, sol. 2.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, q. 2, a. 1, sol. 1, ad 8um.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, q. 3, a. 2, sol. 1.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, a. 1, sol. 1, ad 1um.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, a. 3, sol. 1, ad 3um.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, a. 1, sol. 1, ad 4um.

The foregoing seems to indicate the special *ex opere operato* effect of satisfaction as sacramental. Certainly St. Thomas makes it clear that sacramental satisfaction has a far greater value in expiating temporal punishment than do penal works privately assumed.

St. Thomas likewise points out the special effects of sacramental satisfaction. Satisfaction *in voto*, being part of true contrition, cooperates in the conferring of grace; actual satisfaction achieves an increase of grace.²⁰³ By satisfaction the penitent attains the full effect of grace in the abolition of sin, because satisfaction liberates the penitent entirely from the debt of sin.²⁰⁴

As a remedy for sin, the satisfaction should be assigned according as it will aid either the sinner himself or others. In this connection a greater punishment is sometimes enjoined for a lesser sin, either because the penitent himself is more prone to the sin, e.g., a heavier penance would be imposed upon a young man for the sin of fornication than would be assigned to an older man, even though the older man probably sinned more grievously; or "because in one person, such as a priest, a sin is more dangerous than in another; or because many people are more prone to that sin, and accordingly the many are to be frightened through the punishment of one." Thus, according to St. Thomas, it is not an absolute rule that a greater penance is always imposed for a greater sin.²⁰⁵

In enjoining satisfaction as medicine, there is also a certain special suitability in each of the three classes of satisfactory works against sins arising from one of the three great sources of sin. "Against the concupiscence of the flesh fasting is arrayed; against the concupiscence of the eyes, almsgiving; against the pride of life, prayer."²⁰⁶

Therefore the priest must enjoin proportioned satisfaction, and the penitent, having accepted it, must fulfill that satisfaction.

²⁰³ *Summa Theologica*, III, q. 90, a. 2, ad 2um.

²⁰⁴ *In Librum II^{um}*, Dist. XVI, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 2, ad 3um.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, Dist. XX, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 1.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 3 and ad 3um.

JOHN DUNS SCOTUS (+1308)

John Duns Scotus was born about the year 1270. The place of his birth is not as yet determined, although England seems more probable. He joined the Franciscans, probably about 1290.

Scotus lived and taught at Oxford. It is quite certain that he went to Paris in 1304 as a Bachelor of Arts. The Franciscan General, Gonsalvus de Vallebona, wrote on November 18, 1304, to the guardian of the college of the Franciscans at Paris, instructing him to present Scotus at the University for the Doctor's degree.

He taught only a short time at Paris. In 1307 or 1308, Scotus was sent to Cologne, probably to take a post as professor at the University.

Scotus died in Cologne on November 8, 1308, and was buried there in the Monastery of the Minorites.

Duns Scotus wrote voluminously, but the editions of his works probably contain more than he actually wrote. His greatest work, the *Opus Oxoniense*, a commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard, was written while Scotus was at Oxford.²⁰⁷

NATURE OF SATISFACTION

On the surface, Scotus' doctrine concerning satisfaction seems very much the same as that taught by his predecessors. There are differences, however, which flow both from his concepts of sin and of the sacrament of Penance and from his personal view on the subject of satisfaction performed in the state of mortal sin.

Scotus adopts the two-fold use of the term satisfaction, a use commented upon by St. Bonaventure earlier. Satisfaction in general is "the voluntary restoration of an equivalent not otherwise due."²⁰⁸ In this sense satisfaction applies equally well to contracts and every type of obligation, and to satisfaction for sin. For, "since guilt makes the sinner a debtor to him against whom he

²⁰⁷ This masterpiece occupies Vols. 8-21 of the Paris (Vivès) Edition of Scotus' *Opera Omnia*.

²⁰⁸ In *IVum Librum Sententiarum*, Dist. XV, q. 1, n. 3, p. 174: "De primo sciendum, quod satisfactio generaliter sumptae haec est ratio: Satisfactio est redditio voluntaria aequivalentis alias indebiti."

sins, that notion of satisfaction may be found there so that, namely, he [the sinner] renders to him [against whom he sins] the equivalent, not otherwise due, of what he has taken away from him through sin."²⁰⁹

This satisfaction in general consists, for the most part, in voluntary penal actions or sufferings. It may indeed happen that satisfaction will be found in some great non-penal act of charity accepted by God, which, while not punishment in the proper sense, is a greater good than the evil of sin and renders greater honor to God than the proper punishment of sin. But ordinarily satisfaction consists in acts or sufferings of a penal character.²¹⁰

The penal, voluntary acts or sufferings which go to make up satisfaction in general are reduced to three classes:

to the interior act of displeasure or the suffering of sadness; and to the exterior act of confessing one's own sin, which is exceedingly penal, or the accompanying suffering, namely, shame; and to the purely external act, or suffering, namely mortifying the flesh; and all such mortification is said to be contained or to be reduced to fasting; or raising up the mind of God, and this is accomplished through prayer; or dispensing one's temporal goods, which is done through almsgiving.²¹¹

It immediately becomes evident that the third, or purely external act is identical with satisfaction in the proper sense. Scotus declares this explicitly in what follows.

Satisfaction in the strict sense "is the laborious or penal external operation, voluntarily assumed, to punish sin committed by one's self, in order to placate the divine offense; or it is the suf-

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*: ". . . cum culpa faciat delinquentem debitorem ei, in quem peccat, potest ibi ista ratio satisfactiois inveniri ut, scilicet reddat sibi aequivalentem, et alias indebitum, quantum sibi abstulit per peccatum."

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, n. 8, p. 198.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*: ". . . ad actum interiorem displicentiae, vel passionem tristitiae, et ad actum exteriorem confitendi proprium peccatum, quod est valde poenale; vel passionem concomitantem, scilicet verecundiam, et ad actum simpliciter exteriorem, vel passionem, scilicet macerando carnem; et omnis talis maceratio dicitur contineri vel reduci ad jejunium, vel elevando mentem in Deum, et hoc fit per orationem, vel sua temporalia erogando, quod fit per elemosynam."

Scotus holds that once the act of mortal sin has ceased, that which remains to make a man a sinner is a logical relation or obligation of undergoing punishment, "in so far as the sinner is the object of the intellect or of the will of God, because after he has committed the sin, the will of God ordains him to a punishment corresponding to the sin, and then the intellect [of God] foresees, and for all time, until the due punishment is paid."²¹⁶

This obligation of undergoing punishment can be fulfilled by punishment or by the equivalent of punishment in the divine acceptance. Once a sin has been committed, because He has been offended by it, God wills to punish it. Once again Scotus admits God can accept something other than punishment, but according to the ordered power of God, sin is regularly taken away and order restored through punishment. Moreover, in order to remove sin this punishment must be voluntary.²¹⁷ Penance, which either punishes committed sin, or detests committed sin, or willingly accepts the punishment inflicted, or patiently sustains such inflicted punishment, is the voluntary *punishment* which is required for the removal of post-baptismal mortal sin.²¹⁸

The guilt of sin, or the obligation to punishment, can be remitted. Penance, exercised in one of the four acts listed above, is required as the voluntary punishment. From this penance, contrition follows. If that contrition be perfect, it provides a previous disposition or congruous merit for which God remits sin. If that contrition remains imperfect, then sin will be forgiven only through absolution when the sacrament of Penance is received.²¹⁹

Either way of forgiveness, by which the debt of eternal punishment is forgiven and grace restored to the soul, ordinarily leaves a debt of temporal punishment to be paid up by the penitent. This

²¹⁶ *In IV^{um} Librum*, Dist. XIV, q. 1, n. 6, p. 13: "... quaedam ratio rationis inquantum est objectum intellectus, vel voluntatis Dei, quia postquam commisit, Dei voluntas ordinat ipsum ad poenam correspondentem peccato, et tunc intellectus praevitiet, et pro omni tempore, donec poena debita sit soluta." Cf. *Ibid.*, nn. 3-5, pp. 9-11.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, nn. 8-13, pp. 29-33.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, nn. 14-16, pp. 37-38.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, q. 4, nn. 6-10, pp. 157-159; cf. *ibid.*, Dist. XIX, q. unica, n. 23, p. 649.

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fering or punishment voluntarily undergone to effect the same end."²¹² This proper understanding of the term satisfaction is thus much more limited than satisfaction in general which can be found in both interior and exterior acts.

Strict or particular satisfaction is distinguished, as an external work or suffering, from the internal act or suffering of the mind, and from the act of the mouth or the accompanying shame.²¹³

SATISFACTORY WORKS

Scotus has already indicated that the third act of satisfaction in general consists in fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. He repeats and adds to that statement here, saying that strict satisfaction is found

in those three difficult works, namely, fasting, prayer, and almsgiving . . . ; or in the voluntary sufferings (*passionibus*) accompanying those three most difficult works.²¹⁴

EFFECT OF SATISFACTION

Satisfaction performed through these three works achieves the removal of the temporal punishment due to already remitted sin; it thereby avoids for the penitent the more bitter punishment which would otherwise be exacted after the present life in purgatory.²¹⁵

NECESSITY OF SATISFACTION

A brief sketch of Duns Scotus' opinion on mortal sin and its forgiveness seems to be the only means of grasping his view of the need of satisfaction.

The state of habitual injustice which follows upon mortal sin is the privation of sanctifying grace. That alone, however, is not sufficient to label a person a sinner nor to differentiate between one who has sinned but once and one who has sinned many times.

²¹² *Ibid.*, n. 11, p. 207: "... satisfactio *strictae sumpta* est operatio exterior laboriosa vel poenalis, voluntarie assumpta, ad puniendum peccatum commissum a se, et hoc ad placandum divinam offensam; vel est passio seu poena voluntarie tolerata in ordine praedicto."

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*; cf. *ibid.*, n. 1, p. 173.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, n. 14, p. 217.

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the penitent accomplishes through strict satisfaction, and because the debt remains after forgiveness, satisfaction is necessary.

POSSIBILITY OF SATISFACTION

Concerning strict satisfaction, Scotus merely states that there is no difficulty as to its possibility.²²⁰ Yet in dealing with satisfaction in general, he lays down the principles which would also apply in this case.

Negatively, Scotus does not hold that satisfaction is impossible to man unaided by the merits of Christ, if that impossibility be understood to limit the *absolute* power of God. Positively, he does hold that, according to the ordered power of God,

God has not disposed to give first grace to any sinner except in virtue of the merit of him, who was without sin, namely, Christ, because . . . He has not disposed to reconcile an enemy to Himself, except through homage more pleasing than his offense was displeasing to Him; and such homage of Him is the Passion of Christ, or the merit of it (*vel meritum ejus*); and just as He has not disposed to give grace to a sinner without the Passion, without which grace there can be absolutely no satisfaction, because not equivalent in some respect, nor simply, nor in the divine acceptance, accordingly with much more reason according to the ordered power of God it is not possible that satisfaction be made to God for sin, except in virtue of the Passion of Christ.²²¹

The secret of our ability to make satisfaction to God rests squarely and exclusively upon the merits of Jesus Christ. What would apply to satisfaction in general would also apply to one of its acts.

CONDITIONS

In addition to dependence on the merits of Christ, there are other conditions which must be fulfilled in order that a work may be satisfactory.

The first condition of a satisfactory work is that it must be acceptable to God. That might be termed the tenor of thought to

²²⁰ *In IV^{um} Librum*, Dist. XV, q. 1, n. 11, p. 206.
²²¹ *Ibid.*, n. 7, p. 180.

be drawn from Scotus' general treatment of the subject; for example, he states that penal works must be offered unless something else proves acceptable to God. And, as cited above, he rules out satisfaction in general, which is not founded on grace because, among other reasons, it is not equivalent homage in the divine acceptance.

Man must be in possession of temporal life in order to offer satisfaction; the time of satisfaction ends with death.

Concerning man's need of the state of grace, Scotus' opinion is somewhat involved. He teaches, as do his predecessors, that it is impossible to offer total satisfaction to God for one sin while remaining actually impenitent in regard to another mortal sin.²²² For total satisfaction or satisfaction in general reconciles the penitent to the one offended.

The treatment of the possibility of satisfaction in general has already shown that all human satisfaction depends absolutely on grace and therefore on the Passion of Christ.

Yet, when Scotus treats of the fulfillment of assigned sacramental satisfaction, he clearly states that the state of grace is not required for the remission of the punishment. First, Scotus quotes the opinion so familiar from the works of his predecessors: man cannot make exterior satisfaction for one mortal sin while he remains guilty of another mortal sin, for then man would placate God while remaining God's enemy. Scotus views this opinion as too harsh, and in opposition to it he states:

Therefore I say without prejudice, that he who truly repents once, and receives the satisfaction, or condign penance imposed upon him by the Church, exclusive of error in the power of the keys (*clave non errante*), however much he may afterward fall back, he will never be held, except to fulfilling that single satisfaction; and if he should fulfil it in charity, it is better, because he not only pays the penalty, but gains merit. But if he should fulfil it voluntarily outside charity, indeed he pays the penalty, but he does not merit grace; if, however, it is demanded of him outside charity, the penalty is paid, although he himself does not pay it.²²³

²²² *In IV^{um} Librum*, Dist. XV, q. 1, n. 10, p. 206.

²²³ *Ibid.*, n. 16, p. 227; cf. *ibid.*, nn. 15-18.

Therefore Scotus admits that it is much better for man to fulfill the assigned penance in the state of grace, for then his act is not only satisfactory but also meritorious. Yet man, even though he is not in the state of grace, still pays the penalty so long as he performs the assigned penance willingly; in this case, of course, his act is satisfactory but not meritorious of grace. Scotus also lists the case where man is neither in the state of grace nor willing to make satisfaction; in that case the penalty is exacted even though the penitent himself does not pay it. This objective suffering of the penalty is sufficient to pay the debt of punishment. It is neither satisfactory nor meritorious, but is rather called *satisfactio simpliciter*, for it both reconciles and placates. According to the commentator on Scotus' doctrine, this would be exemplified by justifying contrition, or by any strict satisfaction performed by a grace is nevertheless termed true satisfaction by Scotus. This seems to apply only to the performance of assigned sacramental satisfaction. The objective suffering of a penalty, which is really not satisfaction at all, is merely sufficient payment beyond which nothing further is demanded.

Scotus is mainly concerned with the voluntary performance of assigned satisfaction outside the state of grace. From what he has said he draws several conclusions. (1) In a case where a penitent has fulfilled while in mortal sin a great part of the satisfaction imposed on him, and then repents of this particular mortal sin, he is not obliged to repeat the penance by which he has satisfied for his previous sins; satisfaction is to be assigned only for this most recent mortal sin which was the cause "on account of which that satisfaction was dead (*mortua*)."²²⁵ (2) The fact that satisfaction is dead does not destroy it as satisfactory, but only in so far as it placates or restores to friendship.

And if it is said, therefore it is not satisfaction, it does not follow, because it suffices to God that a person volun-

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, q. 1, Commentarius, n. 168, p. 254.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, q. 1, n. 16, p. 228.

tarily pays the penalty due as punishment of committed sin, because even *satispassio*, which appears less, suffices.²²⁶

(3) If such a person in mortal sin were to die and be condemned to hell before he had finished the satisfaction assigned, that temporal punishment would be completed in hell in whatever measure it was not performed on earth. Once payment was completed, the man would no longer be punished with that particular penalty.²²⁷

The real point of difference between Scotus and the theologians previously treated seems to be this: the earlier theologians viewed all satisfaction as necessarily conciliatory and hence demanded the state of grace as a condition; Scotus holds that, in the fulfillment of sacramental satisfaction as such, the payment of the penalty is all that is *per se* intended; therefore that payment can be separated from the notion of reconciliation and can be made without the state of grace in the penitent.

On the part of the satisfactory work, the first condition is voluntariness; as seen in Scotus' definition of satisfaction previously, voluntariness is essential to satisfaction. Unless the work is offered freely, it is not satisfaction, but is merely the objective suffering of punishment (*satispassio*).²²⁸

Besides, satisfactory works must be good works and ordinarily must be penal. It may sometimes happen that God will accept some good non-penal act instead of the proper punishment, but the rule calls for penalties.²²⁹

Scotus does not explicitly state that exterior satisfaction must proceed with the help of actual grace. That condition, however, is not excluded in any positive statement, and its necessity may be inferred from his general opinions on the entire process of repentance as the work of God. Fruitful penance is the work of God, not of man.²³⁰

SACRAMENTAL SATISFACTION

Peter Lombard had declared that contrition, confession, and

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, n. 3, p. 174; cf. *ibid.*, n. 11, p. 207.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, n. 8, p. 198.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, Dist. XX, q. unica, n. 3, p. 683.

satisfaction were required for the perfection of Penance. Most of the writers who followed him concluded that these three constituted, in some way, parts of the sacrament. Duns Scotus, however, states that "those three are in no way parts" of the sacrament of Penance, "because . . . the sacrament of Penance is that sacramental absolution given in certain words. . . ." ²³¹ Yet when he deals with the question of restitution and its place in the process of repentance and the reception of the sacrament of Penance, Duns Scotus distinctly says of restitution that "it is not special satisfaction, which is the third part of Penance." ²³²

The solution of these apparent opposites rests in a question of terms. In the first instance, Duns Scotus considers the question in relation to integral or essential and subjective parts, and touches the sacrament of Penance. In the second case, he seems to consider satisfaction as a part of the penal process which must precede the reception of the sacrament. ²³³ Add to this the fact that Scotus considered integral and essential as synonymous. ²³⁴

Even if those observations do not provide adequately for the solution, the fact remains that Scotus holds that the three acts in question are required for the worthy (*digna*) reception of the sacrament. Confession is obviously required because the confessor can absolve only those who have accused themselves in the sacramental forum; and absolution is of no profit to the penitent unless he has at least imperfect contrition. "Satisfaction, however, must follow the sacrament of Penance in order that it may have efficacy, and this [satisfaction] *in re* or *in voto*, unless the judge can consider that those other preceding punishments are sufficient for the payment of the entire punishment." ²³⁵

Therefore, whatever may be said about the method or manner in which Duns Scotus requires these three acts of the penitent, the fact remains that he does require them. His view of satisfaction certainly seems to agree with the earlier doctrine on the matter;

²³¹ *In IVum Librum*, Dist. XVI, q. 1, n. 7, p. 421; cf. *ibid.*, Dist. XIV, q. 4, n. 2, p. 139.

²³² *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, q. 2, n. 29, p. 329.

²³³ *Ibid.*, Dist. XVI, q. 1, n. 5, p. 419.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, n. 1, p. 416.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, n. 7, p. 421.

satisfaction is necessary in order that the full effect of the sacrament be attained; it is not, however, necessary in such a degree that its absence would invalidate the sacrament. Such a declaration does not conflict with what is now the more commonly accepted view; in fact, even if not in word, satisfaction is an integral part of the sacrament of Penance.

The confessor meets the following situation in the confessional. The penitent, freed from the guilt and debt of eternal punishment due to his sin, is still bound by a debt of temporal punishment; indeed the debt of eternal punishment is changed into a debt of temporal punishment. The priest through the power of the keys looses a part of this temporal debt in absolution. For the remainder of that debt he assigns sacramental satisfaction. ²³⁶

Ordinarily, therefore, the confessor must assign satisfaction, and the penitent, if he accepts it, must fulfill that satisfaction. ²³⁷ It must be admitted that contrition can be so intense as to remove the entire debt of punishment. That fact, however, does not render irrational the precept concerning the injunction of some proper satisfaction for each sin. Contrition always includes some satisfaction, at least *in voto*, and while it may suffice for the total punishment occasionally, yet the rule which calls for infliction of satisfaction is a general rule given for general cases, not for the exception. ²³⁸

If the penitent is unwilling to receive any penance from the priest, and yet is sincerely sorry for his sins and firmly resolved not to repeat them, he should be absolved and not sent away unforgiven, lest he should fall into despair. Yet the satisfaction due should be made known to him, and he should be urged to fulfill that satisfaction or its equivalent even without sacramental injunction; otherwise he will pay in full in purgatory. ²³⁹

In dealing with a dying penitent the confessor must not impose

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, Dist. XIV, q. 4, n. 10, p. 159; cf. *ibid.*, Dist. XVI, q. 1, n. 7, p. 421; Dist. XXII, q. unica, n. 21, p. 824.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, Dist. XIX, q. unica, n. 27, p. 659; cf. *ibid.*, Dist. XVII, q. unica, n. 22, pp. 547-548.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, Dist. XV, q. 1, n. 18, p. 228.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, n. 14, p. 217; cf. *ibid.*, Dist. XIX, q. unica, nn. 27-28, p. 659; Dist. XVII, q. unica, n. 22, p. 547.

the penance due here on earth, nor can he impose a certain punishment in purgatory because he lacks jurisdiction there. The priest can propose the penance due and urge the penitent to fulfill it should his health return; with this he should also recall the mercy of God to the dying person and strive to instill trust in God. In a case where the penitent is so close to the end that he hears words only with difficulty, mention of the penalty can be omitted, and only the mercy of God extolled.²⁴⁰

Sacramental satisfaction must be proportioned to the guilt. That proportion need not be mathematically exact; rather a certain latitude is allowed, so that the priest's judgment and the imposition of satisfaction should follow the mean of right reason. Below that latitude a lesser punishment does not suffice: a punishment above it should not be imposed. But whatever is imposed within that mean must be performed here or completed in purgatory. Moreover, where the punishment assigned is within the mean, even though it is somewhat less than the penalty exactly due, if it is fulfilled in satisfaction, nothing greater will be demanded in purgatory.²⁴¹

Besides this proportion in justice, wherever possible the satisfaction enjoined should bear a congruous relation to the sin for which it is due; in this way the medicinal aspect of satisfaction may be fulfilled. In general, to the types of sins flowing from the three sources of sin named by St. John,²⁴² congruous punishments should be applied; thus for sins of the flesh, fasting should be enjoined; for sins of pride, prayer; and for sins concerning temporal things, almsgiving. In this fashion, correspondence, as well as proportion, of the punishment to the guilt is achieved.²⁴³

The confessor must always consider the state of the penitent in assigning penance. In striving for just proportion of satisfaction to sin, he must be certain not to enjoin too heavy a penalty.²⁴⁴ Even in choosing penances most suitable to the correction of an

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Dist. XX, q. unica, n. 10, pp. 686-687.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Dist. XIX, q. unica, n. 26, pp. 651-652.

²⁴² I John 2:16.

²⁴³ *Op. cit.*, Dist. XV, q. 1, n. 12, p. 216.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, n. 14, p. 217.

evil, the confessor must realize that the condition of the person is the final determinant of the satisfaction to be enjoined. In this sense, a poor man, guilty of the sin of theft, could hardly be assigned almsgiving as a penance.²⁴⁵ Thus the penance which may well correspond to the sin as a general rule does not at all correspond necessarily in special cases.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, n. 12, p. 216.

2. The same three classes of satisfactory works are almost always listed: almsgiving, fasting, and prayer. Even in the authors who did not make the classification as such, these three works are implicitly or explicitly included.

3. Satisfaction is clearly seen as necessary. In fact the necessity of satisfaction might well be called *the* point of twelfth century teaching. The authors of that century vividly insist upon satisfaction as the only means of escaping the terrible pains of purgatory.

4. The reason for temporal punishment of sin was not touched upon by the writers of the twelfth century. The Scholastics, however, sought out the reason for such a debt. The explanation of St. Thomas has become the common opinion of Catholic theologians.

5. The possibility of satisfaction was not treated explicitly at any length in the twelfth century. It is implied or stated as a fact: man can escape those terrible torments of purgatory. The thirteenth century turned to the explanation of the possibility. God only demands the equality of proportion, not of quantity. Christ satisfied for the infinite debt contracted by sin; by the merits of Christ, man satisfies for the finite debt.

6. The prerequisite of the state of grace won unanimous support in the case of extra-sacramental satisfaction. Scotus alone differs from the other theologians in the fact that he denies its necessity in the case of sacramental satisfaction. The central reason for demanding the state of grace is that before the penitent's satisfactory works can be acceptable to God, the penitent himself must be pleasing to God. Only the state of grace constitutes the penitent a friend of God.

7. Intent upon the requirement of the state of grace, many theologians gave no evident thought to the revival of sacramental satisfaction performed in the state of mortal sin. Indeed for Scotus this question presented no problem, since he held that sacramental satisfaction performed in the state of mortal sin immediately attained its satisfactory effect.

Peter Lombard and his disciple, Peter of Poitiers, denied any revival to assigned satisfaction which is performed in the state of mortal sin. Their statement of the problem, however, was

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

As was suggested in the Foreword, this study of satisfaction has amounted to a synthesis of the ideas propounded by the theologians of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries concerning the operations of divine mercy and justice in the forgiveness of sin. The key to their teaching on satisfaction depends upon the proper balance of these two divine attributes.

In general. Most striking is the substantial agreement of the doctrine of the doctors of these two centuries of theological growth with the subsequent decrees of the Council of Trent, formulated in refutation of the errors of the Reformers. Once due allowance has been made for the clearer notion of the efficacy of the sacrament of Penance and of the exact place which satisfaction occupies in the sacrament, it is evident that the doctrine taught, even by the earliest theologians considered, is the doctrine which is taught today.

This doctrine on satisfaction was substantially gathered and united by the theologians of the twelfth century. Except for vocabulary, the great Scholastics had little to add to the substance of the doctrine; their treatment, however, was better synthesized, involved more of the finer points, and included more explanations of accepted principles.

In particular. There were, however, several points which received different emphasis in the earlier teaching and one point indicative of complete difference in one case.

1. The notion of satisfaction began with the realization of the fact of certain penalties or works assigned or assumed in punishment of sin. The renaissance of theology was still vividly aware of the teaching and demands of the early Church on laborious penance. The gradual development reached its zenith in St. Thomas' explanation of the two parts in satisfaction: punishment and spiritual medicine.

different from that of the later theologians. In their case, the penitent had previously concealed a mortal sin in confession and hence was not truly repentant. The satisfaction performed by such a penitent was dead and would necessarily be repeated upon complete conversion.

The great Scholastics considered an entirely different case. In this case the penitent was truly repentant for all his mortal sins. He received the injunction of the confessor, but before he fulfilled the penance he fell into mortal sin and performed his penance in that state. The authors of the thirteenth century sought to determine the value of such penance upon the penitent's final conversion.

Alexander of Hales answered strictly that such works had no value, that they do not revive with the return of grace, and that the satisfaction must be repeated.

St. Bonaventure held that the revival of the satisfactory value of such works performed in sin is probable. Yet he taught that to deny such revival is more secure. The satisfaction need not be repeated since the penitent fulfilled the precept of the confessor. The penitent committed no sin by fulfilling his penance in mortal sin, but the debt of temporal punishment remains to be expiated.

St. Albert the Great admitted the revival of such satisfactory works provided that they left an effect in the penitent. The precept of the confessor was fulfilled, but satisfaction was not made because the penitent was not acceptable to God.

St. Thomas taught that those satisfactory works would revive which leave some effect in the penitent; those works which pass away completely must be repeated.

All the opinions give evidence that the *ex opere operato* efficacy of sacramental satisfaction was not totally understood. The common teaching today is that such sacramental satisfaction performed in mortal sin probably attains its satisfactory effect when the obstacle of mortal sin is removed. The penitent certainly fulfills the precept of the confessor although he probably commits a venial sin by performing his penance in mortal sin.

8. Practically every theologian demanded for real satisfaction the help of God, the help of grace. Ordinarily they did not use

the term *actual grace*, but it might be argued that St. Bonaventure did intend it according to his own terminology.

9. The obligation of the confessor to enjoin satisfaction is recognized as serious. Its binding force relaxed only in cases involving penitents for whom satisfaction was physically or morally impossible. The case most often recited was that of a person near death or weakened by grave and prolonged illness. In such a case the confessor was not obliged to enjoin satisfaction. Yet—and this is further evidence of the importance placed upon the remission of temporal punishment through satisfaction—these theologians directed the priests to make known to the penitent the penance which would ordinarily be assigned, in order that the penitent might perform that penance should he be returned to health. Scotus alone explicitly stated that a penitent who was unwilling to accept the injunction of penance from the confessor should be absolved, and then only if such a penitent were truly sorry and determined to avoid relapses. Yet Scotus further directed that the satisfaction due should be manifested and the penitent urged to fulfill it even without sacramental injunction.

10. These theological writers also directed that the depth of contrition should be weighed by the confessor before he enjoins sacramental penance. Either implicitly or explicitly, all of them asserted that contrition might be so deep as to fully satisfy for the temporal punishment due to sin. Yet this fact alone would not allow the confessor to omit the injunction of satisfaction.

According to his principles, Scotus would logically allow the injunction to be omitted in a case where contrition was sufficient to satisfy totally, since he allows its omission in the case of a refusal by an otherwise disposed penitent.

Many of the early writers did not consider explicitly the *omission* of the injunction. Peter of Poitiers pointed out that the priest cannot know such a depth of contrition and that in any case the injunction would be good in practice. Alain of Lille maintained the injunction should be rarely omitted—only in cases where immense contrition is exteriorly manifest. Alexander of Hales and St. Bonaventure held that the injunction could be omitted only if the priest were certain that the penitent had made full satis-

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 faction. St. Thomas taught that even if the total satisfaction by the penitent were certainly known, the injunction of satisfaction would still have to be made because it is a matter of precept.

11. The theologians demanded the injunction of satisfaction proportioned to the number and the gravity of the sins confessed. This conclusion in turn is based on other facts which the authors clearly recognized.

a. There was universal recognition of the disproportion between the remittance of temporal punishment through satisfaction and the exaction of temporal punishment in the flames of purgatory. In the writings of every theologian, penitents are urged to perform satisfaction with due diligence and thus to escape the incomparably more painful torments of purgatory.

b. Correlative to this realization of the disproportion between satisfaction and purgation is the stress upon the need of complete satisfaction during this life so that there will be no debt to be exacted in purgatory. Such stress lends the impression that the temporal punishment due to sin can be fully remitted in this life with comparative ease. In the writing of St. Thomas the value and efficacy of satisfaction in remitting temporal punishment is clearly attributed to its sacramental character.

12. The medicinal character and value of satisfaction as assigned in the confessional is both known and demanded. The principle is that confessors should assign to penitents acts of those virtues which are contrary to their sins. This insistence upon the medicinal character of satisfaction in no way detracted from satisfaction as a punishment of sin. Rather did the theologians give great importance to both aspects because satisfaction is part of a sacrament which not only forgives the sins of men but also cures them. The priest in the confessional is not only the spiritual judge but also the spiritual physician of souls.

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