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THE THOMISTIC CONCEPT OF THE
VICARIOUS MODE OF SATISFACTION

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INTRODUCTION

The dogma of the Redemption may well be termed the dogma of mysteries. Whether it be considered only in its most general sense, as the complement to the antecedent truths of creation, original sin, and the Incarnation, or, in its limited and immediate application, as the atonement for sin and the cause of man's salvation wrought by the Passion and Death of Christ, the fact remains that the various aspects or elements involved in the theological concept of Redemption are many and complex.

In any work or treatise on the Redemption, therefore, the immediate problem at hand seems to resolve itself into one of procedure and plan. This difficulty is particularly realized in the present work which has for its subject-matter the Redemption of Christ considered as a vicarious satisfaction for the sins of mankind. It will be of advantage, therefore, to incorporate here a brief summary of the Redemption in all its aspects, as a means of obtaining perspective, and of securing a more accurate placement of the thesis itself.

The doctrines which serve as prerequisites for the mystery of the Redemption are those of original sin, its consequences, and the Incarnation. It is through the Incarnation that Christ, as the God-Man, is constituted a Mediator between man and his Creator. Christ exercised this divine office of Mediator as Teacher and King, but pre-eminently as Redeemer.

The dogma of the Redemption itself may be conveniently divided into three divisions: the revelation of Redemption, the Catholic concept, the Protestant concept. Briefly, the revelation of the Redemption will include all the notions of sin, sacrifices for sin, and the Messianic hope of Judaism; the testimony of the Scriptures of the New Testament, the historical development as found in Tradition, and the teachings of the infallible magisterium of the Church.

The Catholic concept will embrace the presupposed truths already mentioned, and all the various aspects or elements contained in the mystery itself. Of the latter, the two considered of primary importance are: a) the material aspect of Redemption, or the price to be paid (penal expiation); b) the moral aspect, or the offense to be repaired (satisfaction properly so-called).

Finally, a study of the Redemption today demands a consideration of the erroneous concepts of the Protestant Reformation, rationalism, and modern liberalism.

In presenting the Catholic concept alone, whether in whole or in

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part, there is still greater need for order and systematic procedure, for, in the words of Prat:

Redemption is essentially the destruction of sin. There are as many aspects of Redemption as there are of sin; if sin is a fall, redemption will be an uplifting; if sin is an infirmity, redemption will be a remedy; if sin is a debt, redemption will be its payment; if sin is a fault, redemption will be an expiation; if sin is a bondage, redemption will be a deliverance; if sin is an offense, redemption will be a satisfaction as regards man, a propitiation as regards God, and a mutual reconciliation between God and man.¹

The Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas, has both systematized and analysed these various aspects according to the following schema:

III Sent., d. 20, q. 1, a. 1: It is fitting that human nature be repaired.

Summa, III, q. 1, a. 2: The Incarnation is the means whereby this is to be accomplished. It is to be considered necessary only in the hypothesis that a condigna satisfaction was demanded. The reason for such a necessity is found in the fact that sin, in virtue of the infinity of the injured Divine Majesty, has a *quamdam infinitatem*.

Summa, III, q. 46, a. 1-3: The Passion itself cannot be stated as absolutely necessary, since God could have dispensed from satisfaction without injury to His justice.

Summa, III, q. 46, a. 5-8: The psychology of the Passion.

Summa, III, q. 48, a. 1-5: The Passion causes salvation in various ways or *modis*.

Summa, III, q. 49, a. 1-6: Catalogue of its effects.²

It is in the various *modis*, referred to above, whereby the Passion is said to cause salvation, that St. Thomas has formulated what may be termed the *essence* of the Redemption. In themselves they give a theological expression to the great work of Redemption. The Passion and Death are seen to be the cause of man's salvation insofar as Christ offered to God a meritorious satisfaction which was in itself a sacrifice liberating man from the guilt of sin and its punishment. The following is a summary of these four modes as given in the *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 1-4:

a. 1: Manifestum est quod quicumque in gratia constitutus propter justitiam patitur ex hoc ipso meretur. . . . Secundum quod eam (passionem) aliquis voluntarie sustinet, sic habet principium ab interiori et hoc modo est meritoria.

a. 2: Ille proprie satisfacit pro offensa qui exhibet offenso id quod aeque vel magis diligit quam oderit offensam. Christus autem, ex caritate et obedientia patiendo, majus aliquid Deo exhibuit. . . .

a. 3: Sacricium proprie dicitur aliquid factum in honorem proprie Deo debitum ad eum placandum. . . . Christus autem seipsum obtulit in passione pro nobis, et hoc ipsum quod voluntarie passionem sustinuit Deo maxime acceptum fuit. . . .

¹ Prat, *The Theology of St. Paul*, II, p. 190.

² Rivère, "Redemption", *D.T.C.*, T. XIII, P. II, c. 1949-50.

a. 4: . . . ejus passio fuit quasi quoddam pretium per quod liberati sumus ab utraque obligatione. Nam ipsa satisfactio qua quis satisfacit sive pro se sive pro alio pretium quoddam dicitur.³

It is evident, then, that the Passion and Death of Christ was at once a work of merit, satisfaction, sacrifice, and redemption. Of these four modes or aspects, that of satisfaction alone is to be developed in the present thesis.

Inasmuch as the Thomistic concept of satisfaction is not found in its entirety in one question of the *Summa*, the controlling purpose or aim of this work will be to present a synthesis of the elements involved in vicarious satisfaction, its demonstration, and finally an analysis of the concept itself: the Headship of Christ, the solidarity between Christ and men, the motives of love and obedience in the Saviour's Passion and Death.

The thesis is non-argumentative in procedure. References to opposing views, opinions, or systems are made wholly for the purpose of securing a greater clarity and more accurate appreciation of the Thomistic concept itself.

The bibliography does not pretend to be exhaustive, but it is representative. Considering that the works on satisfaction are almost co-extensive with those treating the complete dogma of the Redemption, limitation of research became a necessity. In addition to the works of St. Thomas Aquinas and his principal commentators, other sources consulted for both pertinent subject-matter and bibliographical references include the works of R. Garrigou-Lagrange, I. M. Vosté, E. Hugon, J. Rivière, and Ad. Tanqueray.

³ Cf. Rivère, *Étude Théologique*, pp. 298-301.

PRELIMINARY NOTIONS OF MEDIATOR AND REDEEMER

1. *Definitions.*

The work of the Redemption, and in particular, its vicarious mode of satisfaction, is basically a work of mediation. It is upon the notion of divine mediation as that process whereby Christ restored a lost harmony between God and man, that the entire doctrine of Redemption rests. To say that Christ redeemed mankind, exclusive of the actual manner or modes by which it was accomplished, is to presuppose that Christ was first of all a Mediator. This chapter, therefore, will, by definition of the terms *mediator* and *redeemer*, and by their specific application to Christ, the Son of God, provide a twofold demonstration for the following important and necessary conclusions: first, that Christ, and He alone, fulfilled most perfectly all the conditions required for a reconciliation between God and man, by virtue of His being a Mediator *par excellence*; and secondly, that He exercised the functions proper to the office of a Mediator most particularly by His redemption of fallen man. The consideration of the satisfaction offered to God by Christ as Redeemer will then follow logically as the subject-matter for the next chapter.

Stated simply, a *mediator* is a go-between. He is looked upon as one responsible for the restoration of harmony between two persons or groups who are for the present at variance with each other. The mediator maintains a neutral position, and this in such a way that he is able to stand between them as the equal friend of each and, by restoring them to their former state, whatever its nature may have been, thereby effects a reconciliation or union.

Dicendum quod ad mediatoris officium proprie pertinet coniungere et unire eos inter quos est mediator: nam extrema ununtur in medio.¹

St. Thomas here uses the name *mediator* in its proper sense, namely, as one who intercedes between two persons with the end in view of conjoining or reconciling them, or in other words, of effecting an agreement or pact between them.

From the above definitions, then, it is evident that there are two

¹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, III pars, q. 26, a. 1. *Note*: For the sake of convenience, future references to the *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas will be given in the following abbreviated form—*Summa*, III, q. 26, a. 1. References to works other than the *Summa* of St. Thomas will be stated as such.

essential conditions or qualities necessary for the attainment of mediation properly so-called: first, that the person who is to act as mediator must be distinct from the parties at variance; secondly, that he must at the same time have something in common with both.

In the application of these notions to the redemptive work of Christ upon earth, both the true meaning of mediation and its essential conditions are fully realized. The offense given God by original sin, which resulted in the loss of union or harmony between Creator and creature, provided the proper setting for the conciliatory intervention of a mediator. Such was the precise motive for the Incarnation of the Son of God. The Second Person of the Holy Trinity assumed a human nature to conjoin or re-unite fallen humanity to the offended God. The Council of Trent has stated the doctrine briefly:

... per meritum unius Mediatoris Domini Nostri Jesu Christi.²

In the words of St. Thomas:

Uniro autem homines Deo perfective quidem convenit Christo, per quem homines sunt reconciliati Deo, secundum illud 2 ad Corinth. 5, 19: "Deus erat in Christo, mundum reconcilians sibi." Et ideo solus Christus est perfectus reconciliavit. Unde cum Apostolus dixisset: "Mediator Dei et hominum homo Christus Jesus, subjunxit: Qui dedit semetipsum redemptionem pro omnibus."³

Christ, therefore, not only fulfills the conditions required for true mediation, but He fulfills them in a manner at once perfect and unique. He is distinct from God the Father by virtue of His individual personality and His human nature; He is also distinct from men by virtue of the hypostatic union from which flows what men do not possess, namely, the plenitude of grace, truth, and divine life. Likewise does Christ, the God-Man, have something in common with both, God and man; relative to God He has the one, same divine nature; relative to man, He is also man by virtue of His complete and integral human nature, body and soul.

The union of the divine and human nature in one Person constitutes a mediator between God and man. As one in the midst of two extremes, his is the office time Christ, by virtue of His humanity, is apart from God, and by His eminent dignity of grace and glory, also apart from men.⁴

Given the fact that the human and divine nature are hypostatically united in Jesus Christ, it may then be said that in the Incarnation He has conjoined God and man physically, while in the work of Redemption and its effects, Christ is said to have united God and

² Council of Trent, V Sess., can. 3, D.B., 672.

³ *Summa*, III, q. 26, a. 1.

⁴ Hugon, *Le mystère de la Rédemption*, p. 164.

man morally.⁵ The latter He has specifically accomplished by bringing to men, as the Ambassador of God, divine precepts and gifts; and in turn, as the Representative of men, giving to God an adequate satisfaction for sin as well as His own intercession on their behalf.⁶

The special office of Mediator being to serve as a bond of union between two parties in order to reconcile them if they are in conflict, and to strengthen the bonds between them, if they are at peace, the God-man was eminently fitted to fill this role; since, by His two natures, He identifies Himself with the two extremes, and since, by His theandric nature, He associates them in an indissoluble union.⁷

Nor less impressive is the cogent reasoning and expression given this truth by St. Augustine:

He (i.e. Christ) is the mediator between God and man, because He is God with the Father and a man with men. A mere man could not be a mediator between God and man; nor could a mere God. Behold the Mediator: Divinity without humanity cannot act as mediator; nor can humanity without Divinity; but the human Divinity and the Divine Humanity of Christ is the sole Mediator between Divinity and humanity.⁸

It is not to be understood, however, that Christ is a Mediator according to both the divine and human nature, in the sense that each is a distinct, formal principle by which the work of mediation is accomplished. Both the human and divine nature are hypostatically united in the Person of the Mediator, and both are equally necessary. This necessity, on the other hand, does not permit Christ to be called a Mediator *secundum quod Deus*, for Christ is in all things equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit, both in nature and power of dominion. But He is, in the fullest meaning of the term, a Mediator *secundum quod homo*, and this for the reasons already cited. To the objection that the removal of sin, the final cause of the mediation of Christ, would seem to pertain to Christ not *secundum quod homo*, but rather insofar as He is God, the following reply is given by St. Thomas:

Licet auctoritative peccatum auferre conveniat Christo, secundum quod est Deus, tamen satisfacere pro peccato humani generis convenit ei secundum quod est homo. Et secundum hoc dicitur Dei et hominum mediator.⁹

Granted that in Christ all the aforementioned conditions for both the personal title of Mediator and the work of mediation itself are fulfilled most perfectly, is it not possible for others to lay a similar claim to the same title and office? Nothing prevents others from being called mediators between God and man, provided they are

⁵ Tanqueray, *Synopsis Theologicae Dogmaticae*, II, p. 722.

⁶ Cf. Janssens, *De Deo-Homine*, I, p. 829.

⁷ Prat, *Theology of St. Paul*, II, p. 166.

⁸ Journal, *Enchiridion Patristicum*, 1500.

⁹ *Summa*, III, q. 26, a. 2, ad 3um.

understood to be such only in a manner *secundarie*, not *principaler*. The reason given for this distinction is that men, apart from Christ, can and do participate in the work of uniting men with God but only by way of disposing them, or of acting on their behalf as ministers of the one, true Mediator. It is in this sense that the prophets and priests of the Old Testament are said to be mediators, namely, as those who foretold and prefigured the perfect Mediator yet to come; the same is true for priests of the New Law, insofar as they are looked upon as the lawful ministers of Jesus Christ. The term thus understood has a special application to the Blessed Virgin Mary. She, as the Mother of the Redeemer, has merited the title of *Mediatritz ad Mediatorem*, and of *Co-redemptrix*.

Sec est realiter causa *secundaria*, Christo subordinata, et dispositiva redemptionis nostrae.¹⁰

Christ is, therefore, as man subsisting in the Person of the Word, alone is the full and perfect meaning of mediation; in Him capable of being completely realized.

2. Christ as Mediator redeemed mankind.

The Gospels give frequent and clear indications that Christ executed the functions proper to His office as Mediator in the following ways: as Teacher, King, and Redeemer. Christ as Teacher expounded to men the truths necessary for the attainment of their end; He expurgated, embellished, and perfected the Old Law. As one to whom had been communicated all the powers on heaven and earth, He also a King, and thereby entitled to all the honors bestowed upon those who enjoy the privileges of royalty. Finally, by His death upon the Cross He offered to His heavenly Father, on behalf of men, the most perfect sacrifice possible. He, as Redeemer and Priest, gave Himself as the Victim.¹¹

The most eminent of all Christ's titles as Mediator and Priest, that of Redeemer, for the principal mode of His mediation is found properly in the Redemption. It was Christ the Redeemer who freed men from sin and restored to them their rights to grace and glory, and who, in the sacrifice of the Cross, offered to God a most perfect satisfaction and atonement of the offense given Him by man, and who, as a result, merited for all mankind eternal salvation. In the words of Rivière:

Jesus is the legate of the Father among men . . . the Mediator between God and us, that is to say, He is the instrument of His revelations, the herald of

¹⁰ Garrigou-Lagrange, *De Christo Salvatore*, p. 514; cf. *Summa*, III, q. 26, a. 1.

¹¹ Cf. *Summa*, III, q. 22; Tanqueray, *op. cit.*, p. 723ff.

His wishes, and reciprocally, in what concerns us . . . He is the one source of salvation, the only means we have of reaching God.¹²

Redemption, in the natural or physical order, is defined etymologically as a *re-buying*. In its fuller meaning, it is an act by which one, in the offering of an adequate payment, acquires anew what was once possessed and lost. The three elements involved in any redemption, therefore, are: a loss, a recovery, and the payment of a price. In the supernatural order, and more explicitly in the Redemption of Christ, these same conditions prevail; for in His Passion and Death upon the Cross, Christ offered His own blood as the price for recovering fallen man from the servitude of sin and restoring him to that friendship he once enjoyed with God.

The servitude of sin (or captivity of the devil) was the direct result of the offense given to God by original sin, whereby man was deprived of the privileges of the supernatural state, namely, the life of grace and the liberties of divine sonship. The price for the release or liberation of man from this state of sin to that of grace Christ paid by the shedding of His blood; wherefore He is said to be a Redeemer.¹³

While it is true that Christ could have saved men through a singular act of love, in itself infinitely meritorious and satisfactory, nevertheless, without the payment of price, the true and full notion of Redeemer does not obtain. In the actual plan of God, therefore, Christ becomes the Saviour in suffering death, and in His offering of it as the price of man's salvation, He is properly called the Redeemer.¹⁴

The Angelic Doctor has expressed the doctrine as follows:

Dicendum quod ad hoc quod aliquis redimat, duo requiruntur, scilicet actus solutionis, et pretium solutum. Si enim aliquis solvat pro redemptione alicujus rei pretium, quod non est suum, sed alterius, ipse non dicitur redimere principalter, sed magis ille cuius est pretium. Pretium autem redemptionis nostrae est sanguis Christi, vel vita ejus corporalis, quae "est in sanguine," quam ipse Christus exsolvit.¹⁵

Consequently, according to the commentary of Cajetan, even though the work of Redemption itself is attributed to the Holy Trinity as its prime cause, the Redemption pertains personally only to Christ because He alone paid the price.¹⁶

¹² "Jesus est l'envoyé du Père auprès es hommes . . . l'intermédiaire de Dieu à nous, c'est-à-dire l'organe de ses révélations, le porte-parole de ses volontés, et réciproquement, de notre côté . . . la source unique du salut, le seul moyen que nous ayons d'aller à Dieu." Rivière, *Étude Théologique*, p. 186.

¹³ Voste, *Commentarius in Summ. Theol.*, p. 368.

¹⁴ Hugon, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

¹⁵ *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 5.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, note 4 (ed. Marietti). Cajetan also gives here a three-fold explanation of the following words used by St. Thomas in reference to the sufferings of

Likewise, in the Scriptures of the New Testament, the word *Redemption* is used to indicate the "Messianic deliverance of men obtained by the blood of Christ offered as a ransom . . . the deliverance of men obtained by paying either the ransom or the price due. This price, as the Synoptics, in full accord with Paul, teach us, is the blood of Christ."¹⁷

"Even as the Son of Man has not come to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many." (Matt., 20:28)

. . . Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity . . . (Titus, 2:14)

It should be evident, therefore, that the price given by Christ does not involve the idea of a pecuniary transaction, nor does it mean that the price was given to the devil into whose captivity man had fallen.¹⁸ The price and its payment have reference to the moral order only, as mentioned above, not to the material or physical order in the accepted sense of these terms.

Thus far it has been demonstrated that Christ, as the unique and principal Mediator between God and mankind, through His death upon the Cross, redeemed man by liberating him from the servitude of sin and the devil, and by returning him to that supernatural state of grace from which, through sin, he had fallen. Redemption, therefore, may be referred to as that entire supernatural economy by which

Christus, nostrum caput, sese nobis substituendo, offert Deo reparationem offensus adaequatam simulque sacrificium perfectum; nosque a captivitate liberat et in bona supernaturalia per lapsum amissa redintegrat et restaurat.¹⁹

According to the analysis of St. Thomas, already given in the Introduction, the aspect of liberation or deliverance (*per modum redemptionis*), and that of restoration presuppose the meritorious aspect of Redemption (*per modum meriti*); as such they are referred to as the effective elements of Redemption. The constitutive elements, on the other hand, comprise the death of Christ considered exclusively not as a mere shedding of blood, but as an appeasement given to God (*per modum sacrificii*); and secondly, as an adequate reparation for

Christ and those of the saints: 1. *Passiones*: "Nam passiones Christi absolute redimunt Ecclesiam: passiones autem Sanctorum non absolute, ut hic dicitur, sed superflue tantum satisfaciunt pro nobis . . ."; 2. *Redemptions*: "Quoniam passio Christi redimit simpliciter, quia a servitute culpae et poenae: passiones vero sanctorum non nisi secundum quid redimunt, scilicet a poena quadam, scilicet temporalis pro actuali peccato debita."; 3. *Profectus*: "Quia passio Christi prodest Ecclesiae per modum redemptionis, etiam si nulla clavis Ecclesiae intercedat: sed passiones sanctorum non pro me satisfaciunt nisi clavium auctoritate mihi applicentur." *Summa*, III, q. 47, a. 5, ad 3um.

¹⁷ Prat, *op. cit.*, I, p. 432.

¹⁸ The section on tradition in Chapter Three will include a further discussion concerning the price of redemption as being paid to the devil.

¹⁹ Hugon, *Tractatus Dogmatici*, II, p. 670.

the offense given Him through sin (*per modum satisfactionis*).²⁰ In the words of the Council of Trent:

Sua sanctissima passione in ligno crucis nobis justificationem meruit et pro nobis Deo Patri satisfecit.²¹

In its very essence, then, Redemption is the blood of Christ offered to God in compensation for an offense—and this is called satisfaction. Hence it follows that satisfaction is the primary and fundamental concept of the dogma of the Redemption.

²⁰ Cf. Hugon, *Le Mystère de la Rédemption*, p. 212; Tanquerey, *op. cit.*, p. 729.

²¹ Council of Trent, VI Sess., cap. 7, D.B., 799.

CHAPTER TWO

THE NOTION OF SATISFACTION

1. Definition and classification.

The theological concept of satisfaction is admittedly involved and complex. The chief source of difficulty is to be found in the fact that even in sacred theology the term itself has more than one meaning or usage. Restitution, for example, may at times be referred to as a kind of satisfaction, but it is not the same as that offered by Christ in the work of the Redemption; nor does the vicarious satisfaction of the Passion have the same meaning as the satisfaction referred to in the Sacrament of Penance. Further, when analyzed exclusively in terms of the Redemption, the exact and complete meaning of satisfaction demands an inquiry into at least the constitutive elements involved in sin, and its relation to the justice of God and the moral order. Of no less importance are the kindred questions of the perfection or values of Christ's satisfaction and of its necessity.

This chapter, therefore, will have as its primary purpose the presentation of whatever pertains to the nature of satisfaction in general, and to the moral satisfaction of Christ in particular—exclusive of its precise mode as applied to the Redemption itself, namely, as a reparation given out of love and obedience on behalf of mankind. It will include, therefore, the various definitions of satisfaction and their proper classification or division; secondly, an exposition of the basic elements of the *reatus poenae* and *reatus culpae* of sin whereby an adequate satisfaction was due to God in reparation for the offense given Him. Finally, there will follow a brief commentary on the perfection or values attached to Christ's satisfaction, and the qualifications that are to be made in regard to its necessity.

While the questions concerning the perfection and the qualifications that satisfaction given by Christ do not pertain directly to the subject-matter of the present treatise, their incorporation, nevertheless, is deemed necessary in order to insure a complete and no less accurate presentation of the redemptive work of satisfaction according to the mind of St. Thomas. This procedure will likewise make possible the final demonstration and analysis of vicarious satisfaction as a more or less integral unit in itself.

The term *satisfactio* etymologically defined signifies that process or action whereby something is said to be made sufficient or equal (*satisfacere*). The term in itself likewise implies an idea of measure or of a certain equality between whatever is given and that which is due or owed.

Satisfactio in aequalitate rei ad rem consistit, hoc est, in adaequatione rei quae solvitur ad id quod debetur.¹

The debt, or that which is said to be due, is always presupposed in any work or action that is intended to make one thing equal to another, or in any action performed expressly for the purpose of satisfying.

Præsupponit namque satisfactio debitum, pro quo satisfaciendum est, et debito præsupposito, tunc satisfactio, quando aliquid exhibetur æquivalens debito, vel excedens illud.²

Satisfaction, then, in its most general sense, is an integral payment of whatever may be due another; it is a compensation or making up for what is owed, either by payment of the debt itself, or by making a return of a sufficient equivalent in place of what is due; it concerns the right of another that has in some way been violated, and consequently the good that is to be restored to him.

The element of debt involved in the term thus far defined may be either material or moral.³

He is said to truly and properly satisfy who gives a price equivalent to the thing taken or injury inflicted, through which the debt is extinguished.⁴

Given this two-fold possibility, it becomes immediately evident that the notion of satisfaction is capable of being applied to both, matters material and moral.

When referred to matters merely material, the term's significance, now definitely specified, is readily recognized. A common example for this type of material satisfaction would be the pecuniary transaction involved in the payment of a debt incurred as a result of a physical or a material wrong, such as the wilful damaging of another's property, or deliberate theft. In this case, however, the compensation given is more properly referred to as *restitution* and not satisfaction. Restitution, it is true, is a compensation, but one that is always obligatory, and one that is given usually, although not exclusively, as a result of a material damage inflicted, or of some material object taken unjustly.⁵

When, on the other hand, the term *satisfactio* is applied to the moral order, it likewise is said to signify the adequate payment of a debt, but a debt that is not material in the accepted sense of the

¹ Medina, *Expositio in IIIam Partem D. Thomae*, q. 48, a. 2.

² Comm. Cajetani, *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 2.

³ "Satisfactio alicui satis fit, aut propter merum debitum, aut propter offensam." Voste, *op. cit.*, p. 357.

⁴ Billuart, *De Incarnatione*, diss. 19, a. 4.

⁵ It should be noted, however, that the term *restitution* is also used in reference to the obligation of compensating for the harm done to the spiritual goods of another, e.g., the restitution due for defamations and dishonor. Cf. *Summa*, II-II, q. 62, a. 1, and footnote 1 (ed. Marietti).

word as described above. On the contrary, satisfaction in the moral order is given, not as an exclusively material compensation, but rather as a voluntary reparation for a personal injury or offense according to an equality demanded by justice. It is in this latter application that the term *satisfactio* receives its proper and strict application.

However, before giving a further analysis of satisfaction in reference to sin and the moral order, it may be stated here that both restitution, considered more properly as a compensation in the material order, and satisfaction as a reparation in the moral order, are based fundamentally upon the exigencies of justice. On the other hand, while restitution is always obligatory, satisfaction remains essentially voluntary; restitution likewise does not necessarily presuppose an injury or offense, while satisfaction does; and whereas restitution properly is not made to God, satisfaction is.⁶

Finally, moral satisfaction as defined above, is not to be confused with sacramental or extra-sacramental satisfaction both of which in themselves are likewise proper to the moral order. Sacramental satisfaction is that act of reparation enjoined upon the penitent particularly for the removal of the temporal punishment due to his sins. Those works performed of one's own free will, such as alms-giving, fasting, and prayer, are referred to as extra-sacramental satisfaction.⁷

Thus classified, it will be seen that the three elements involved in moral satisfaction properly so-called will be as follows: the right or honor of another that has been willfully violated, i.e., the offense or injury inflicted; secondly, the good that is to be restored to the injured person, i.e., the reparation or compensation offered by the one guilty of the offense as payment for what is due; thirdly, the voluntary suffering of the penalty attached to the offense as the adequate means of offering a just or equivalent reparation.

Dicitur quod satisfactio est illatae injuriae recompensatio secundum justitiam aequitatem.⁸

Of these three elements or aspects, those of the offense and the reparation due will be referred to later when applied specifically to sin and the reparation given by Christ in His Passion and Death. A further clarification of the third aspect, however, namely that satisfactio must be just and voluntary, will be given here, since these properties serve to further indicate the precise and necessary manner in which any reparation, exclusive of that demanded by original sin, is to be made for an injury or offense.

⁶ *Ibid.*, a. 1, note 1 (ed. Marietti). St. Thomas also refers to restitution as the *procuratum* to satisfaction, but not to be considered a part of it. Cf. *IV Sent.*, d. 15, q. 1, a. 4, ad 5um.

⁷ Cf. *Summa*, III Supplement, q. 12, note 1 (ed. Marietti).

⁸ *Summa*, III Supp., q. 12, a. 3. Note: Since this section of the *Summa* is concerned with the Sacraments, and with Penance directly, the references made here have been limited to the concept of satisfaction *quoad quidditatem*.

That satisfaction as defined is an act of justice follows logically from the very term itself, i.e., to make sufficient or equal. Its meaning alone definitely designates that equality of proportion upon which justice is based. Satisfaction therefore will always presuppose some inequality of actions resulting in the offense or injury given to another, and the reparation consequently must be so given as to balance or equalize the offense. This is more readily realized when the true nature of an atoning act is considered in its entirety, namely, not as a mere cessation of an offense, but its equally important aspect of providing the recompense due.⁹ Consequently, when the removal of the inequality created by the offense has been effected, satisfaction is correctly said to be an act of justice.

Et quia satisfactio aequalitatem in ipso faciente exprimit, dicit actum justitiae quae est sui ad alterum, proprie loquendo.¹⁰

Justice, simply defined, is that virtue whereby one gives to another what lawfully belongs to him. General or legal justice concerns the common good, while particular justice is subdivided into distributive and commutative. Distributive justice is that by which a lawful superior gives to subjects what is due them in proportion to their merits or their needs; commutative is that by which one renders to another what is due him not according to some proportion, but rather according to a strict equality of both the debt and the price, and under which St. Thomas includes vindictive justice:

Dicendum quod vindicta quae fit auctoritate publicae potestatis secundum sententiam judicis, pertinet ad justitiam commutativam.¹¹

Wherefore, since satisfaction of its very nature involves the reparation of an offense (debt and price), it may be referred to as a species of commutative or vindictive justice, but with the following qualifications: in vindictive justice the recompense is given or made in accord with the decision or pronouncement of the one acting as judge; in satisfaction the recompense is given according to the free will of the one responsible for the injury, and in accordance with the will of the party offended. Likewise, vindictive justice is concerned only with the renewal of an equality demanded by justice; satisfaction, over and above the element of equality, is concerned rather with the renewal of a friendship which is made possible when the offender voluntarily repairs according to the external will of the one injured.¹² As St. Thomas states:

⁹ Cf. *Summa*, III, q. 85, a. 3.

¹⁰ *Summa*, III Supp., q. 12, a. 2. Cf. *IV Sent.*, d. 15, q. 1, a. 3.

¹¹ *Summa*, II-II, q. 80, a. un., ad lum.

¹² *Summa*, III, q. 90, a. 2. Cf. also *ibid.*, q. 85, a. 3, ad 3um, and III Supp., q. 12, a. 2, note 1 (ed. Marietti). For the consideration of satisfaction as a virtue cf. III Supp., q. 12, a. 1.

Unde sicut injuria illata immediate ad inaequalitatem justitiae pertingebat, et per consequens ad inaequalitatem amicitiae oppositam; ita et satisfactio directae ad aequalitatem justitiae perducit, et ad aequalitatem amicitiae ex consequenti.¹³

Without the equality or equivalence demanded by justice, the reparation becomes a mere condonation on the part of the person injured who chooses to accept the compensation such as it is. Unless the reparation be equal or greater than the offense committed, a condonation to some extent is always necessary, but condonation cannot legitimately be termed satisfaction.¹⁴

Finally, it must also be noted here that, since the debt concerned is not of the material order, the reparation to be given according to the equality demanded by justice, will consist in the giving not of external or material *res* as such, but rather will it comprise the actions of the person himself who so desires to offer an adequate atonement.

Et quia usus rerum exteriorum est dare, ideo actum justitiae secundum quod aequalitatem in rebus exterioribus constituit, proprie dicitur hoc quod est "red-dere"; sed "satisfacere" manifeste aequalitatem in actionibus demonstrat, quamvis quandoque unum pro alio ponatur.¹⁵

This follows logically from the fact that the term *moral* is applied to satisfaction in the strict sense as pertaining to the human, responsible actions of persons, which in turn depend upon and flow from the will and mental faculties.

Whatever be the form of these personal actions, determined according to the mode of reparation demanded, the essential condition necessary to their becoming acts of satisfaction is that they be wholly voluntary. The most important element in satisfaction is not the mere suffering of the penalty involved as willed by the one offended, but rather is it the act of the will intending the suffering as an adequate payment for the debt contracted. It stands to reason that the party offended by the voluntary refusal or violation of honor which is due him, can be satisfied only by a voluntary return of the honor that was refused. In the material order justice can be repaired by a mere return of the material element. In the moral order, however, where honor has been voluntarily taken away, honor must be given back, with the intention of making reparation by the return of that honor. Only in this way can a personal, moral injury be repaired. It is for this reason that the suffering of those in hell e.g., can never have a satisfactory value. If one suffers a penalty therefore without the will to repair, it becomes an exaction, but not satisfaction.¹⁶

¹³ *Summa*, III Supp., q. 12, a. 2, ad lum.

¹⁴ Cf. Herve, *De Verbo Incarnato*, II, p. 464; Tanqueray, *op. cit.*, p. 750.

¹⁵ *Summa*, III Supp., q. 12, a. 2.

¹⁶ Reference may be made here to the distinction given by St. Thomas between satisfaction *elicite a justitia*, and *imperative a caritate*. III Supp., q. 12, a. 2, ad lum.

On the contrary, given the will to repair in strict accordance with the wishes of the one offended, or in voluntary obedience to his command, then not only does satisfaction obtain, but there is imparted to it a meritorious value as well.¹⁷ The voluntary element is given particular emphasis in the definition of Medina:

Satisfactio est actio voluntaria, vel passio voluntarie tolerata, qua operans sua sponte tantum facit, quantum justitiae sat est, aut solvens creditori, quod illi debuit, aut voluntarie assumens humilitionis disciplinam, quam peccatum committit.¹⁸

2. The moral satisfaction of Christ—the *elements of sin*.

In the application of the Thomistic concept of satisfaction to the atonement offered by Christ in the work of the Redemption, it will be readily seen that all the conditions and essential elements involved in moral satisfaction are certainly and clearly fulfilled. By His Passion and Death on the Cross Christ voluntarily offered to God His own life's blood as an adequate reparation for the injury given Him by the sin of man. Whence St. Thomas completes his definition of satisfaction, already cited, by referring it immediately to the offense given (God by sin:

Dicitur quod satisfactio est illatae injuriae recompensatio secundum justitiae aequalitatem. Et in idem videtur redire definitio Anselmi, qui dicit quod satisfacere est "honorem debitum Deo impendere", ut consideretur debitum rationis culpae commissae.¹⁹

The Passion and Death of Christ restores to God therefore the honor that the sin of man had taken from Him. Christ performs this act of reparation by a voluntary suffering of the penalty attached to sin and willed by God.

Itaque nomine satisfactionis Christi intelligenda est: reparatio injuriae Deo per peccata hominum irrogatae et solutio poenae debitae.²⁰

Given sin as the specified element of injury contained in the notion of satisfaction in its application to the redemptive work of Christ, there will be given here a brief analysis of sin as a means of further clarifying the exact nature of Christ's satisfaction, exclusive of the

¹⁷ Cf. Paquet, *De Incarnatione*, p. 446.

¹⁸ Medina, *op. cit.*, q. 48, a. 2.

The element of voluntariness is referred to by Cajetan as follows: "Recompensatio enim justitiae attenditur secundum aequalitatem exteriorem, sive sponte sive invito fiat recompensatio: ut patet tam in solutione pecuniae. . . . Recompensatio autem justitiae et amicitiae, nisi sponte fiat a reo, nihil valet: quoniam non est reconciliativa." *Summa*, III, q. 90, a. 2.

Ferrariensis gives this commentary: "Unde talis poena, in quantum est aliquo modo involuntaria, habet aliquid de ratione poenae; in quantum vero est voluntaria, habet rationem satisfactoriae poenae." *Conf. Gent.*, III, c. 158.

¹⁹ *Summa*, III Supp., q. 12, a. 3; cf. *ibid.*, note 1 (ed. Marietti).

²⁰ Paquet, *op. cit.*, p. 447.

vicarious concept itself. The reasons for this analysis are: 1) that satisfaction is of its very nature correlated to sin in such a way that sin may be considered here as the *cause* of Christ's satisfaction; and so too may the mission of Christ the Redeemer be looked upon as the counterpart of the sin of Adam; 2) that the two elements involved in sin, the *reatus culpae et poenae*, i.e., the malice of sin and the punishment due to it, furnish the basis for the ideas involved in the scholastic term of satisfaction, as well as in the so-called theories of penal expiation and of moral reparation to be discussed in the following chapter.

Sin, whether it be considered in reference to the original offense of Adam and Eve, or in relation to the sins of mankind committed since, is a voluntary offense, or morally evil act, against God. The offense may be considered as a merely subjective state of guilt which, on the part of the one committing it, results in an inequality that is contrary to divine justice. Considered objectively, on the part of the one offended, the sin has for its effect the just indignation of God against the sinner which is in turn opposed to the love He has for all creatures.²¹

As defined by St. Thomas, sin is properly an inordinate act as opposed to an act of virtue, and more explicitly, in his explanation of St. Augustine, sin is that thought, word, or act which is opposed to the eternal law.

Et ideo Augustinus in definitione peccati posuit duo: unum quod pertinet ad substantiam actus humani, quod est quasi materiale in peccato, cum dixit, dictum est quasi formale in peccato, cum dixit, contra legem aeternam.²²

The eternal law, however, is the divine reason itself or will of God which in turn commands that the natural order as established by Him be strictly maintained, and forbids any violation thereof. Consequently, when the free will of man, wholly responsible for his voluntary acts, is exercised in such a way so that he departs, in govern his moral being, he is said to act contrary to the eternal law, or more explicitly, to the will of God. This is called sin, and the offense given God by it implies a two-fold violation: 1) a violation of the honor that is due God as the sovereign Creator and Lord upheld by God, and through which He exercises His supreme authority.

In any offense against God therefore, there is a voluntary aversion, or turning away from Him on the part of the sinner; it is a free

²¹ Cf. *Summa*, I-II, q. 87, a. 1, note 1 (ed. Marietti). Here also will be found the distinction drawn between *peccatum, macula, culpa, offensa*.
²² *Ibid.*, q. 71, a. 6. For sin considered in its opposition to virtue, cf. *ibid.*, a. 1.

denial of His supreme excellence and dominion over creatures. Sin is, in other words, a voluntary abuse of God's right to the free, loving, and obedient subjection of rational creatures to His divine and omnipotent will, and as such results in a deliberate injury, i.e., a violation of the right of God to the honor of men. It is for this reason that man, by sin, is said to offend Him personally, that is God as God, for it implies in a certain sense a diminution of the Divine Majesty. Man thereby incurs the guilt consequent upon the offense (*reatus culpae*), and the corresponding obligation to repair God's injured honor.²³

This state of aversion from God is an inordinate disposition by virtue of which the will is not directed towards God as its final end. As long as there is no retraction or reparation of the offense consequent upon the will's turning from God, the sinner is thereby said to be guilty of the offense. In the words of St. Thomas:

Utroque autem modo actus nostri boni vel mali habent rationem meriti vel demeriti apud Deum. Ratione quidem ipsius, in quantum est ultimus hominis finis: est autem debitum ut ad finem ultimum omnes actus referantur. . . . Unde qui facit actum malum non referibilem in Deum, non servat honorem Dei, qui ultimo fini debetur.²⁴

Similarly, since sin also involves a violation of the moral law, of which God is the Supreme Ruler, He must, in accordance with His divine justice, punish those guilty of its violation; hence, sin is said to involve also an exterior disorder which entails the suffering of a punishment, and the sinner thereby incurs a second debt to God, namely, the obligation to undergo the punishment, or to suffer the penalty (*reatus poenae*).²⁵

This punishment is a necessary effect of sin insofar as it transgresses God's moral order in which man, as a creature of God, participates. God can and does forgive an offense, but as the Supreme

²³ Cf. Franzelin, *De Verbo Incarnato*, p. 477; Rivière, *Étude Théologique*, p. 227; Galtier, *De Incarnatione ac Redemptione*, p. 384.

St. Anselm gives this definition: "Hunc honorem debitum qui non Deo reddit, aufert Deo quod suum est, et Deum exonorat; et hoc est peccare." P. L., *Cur Deus Homo*, CLVIII, c. 376.

²⁴ *Summa*, I-II, q. 21, a. 4. St. Thomas also states that when ". . . aliquis eligit id quod repugnat divinae caritati, vincitur praeferre illud caritati divinae, et per consequens plus amare ipsum quam Deum." *Ibid.*, q. 88, a. 2, ad lum.

²⁵ The punishment or penalty involved may be eternal or temporal. If eternal, such as that due to mortal sin, man cannot *de condigno* satisfy (see following section on "necessity of Christ's satisfaction"). If temporal, man can and does satisfy, particularly in sacramental satisfaction, or in any act of penance. The eternal punishment alone is considered here. The satisfaction of Christ, however, is not by any means to be considered a work of penance. "Meritum primario pertinet ad caritatem, sacrificium ad religionem, satisfactio ad iustitiam (in nobis ad poenitentiam, quae non est in Christo impeccabili) et martyrium ad fortitudinem." Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, p. 391, footnote 4.

Legislator of the moral order, His justice demands that the offense be punished. This follows from the fact that the order established by him, be it moral or otherwise, reflects the wisdom of the governing God. Consequently, since sin is in absolute opposition to, and a violation of the moral order such as God has established it, it is essential to the manifestation of His divine goodness and glory that sin be punished. Insubordination on the part of man is not sufficiently repaired through restoring a subordination to God that is already due Him as the Creator. It is a greater indignity in other words, for God to be despised by a creature than it is a token of honor for the creature to be subjected to Him.

*Pecatum ex hoc inducit reatum poenae, quod pervertit aliquem ordinem. . . . subditur Deo, erit inordinatio. . . . Et ideo quaecumque peccata avertunt a Deo caritatem auferentia, quantum est de se, inducunt reatum aeternae poenae.*²⁶

This two-fold debt which is compensated by a true satisfaction, is also referred to as a *double servitude* under which man had fallen as a consequence of sin. Insofar as man had been overpowered by the temptation of Satan inducing him to commit sin, he is said to be under the captivity of the devil, and acquires thereby that stain in the soul (*macula*) which renders him a slave of sin. The second servitude followed as a result of the punishment attached to sin whereby man was now obliged to undergo a chastisement proportionate to the offense, and, since suffering is contrary to the will of man, this is also considered a cruel captivity.²⁷ As expressed by St. Thomas:

*Per peccatum dupliciter homo obligatus erat: primo quidem servitute peccati, quia, "qui facit peccatum, servus est peccati," (Joann. 8:34). . . . Quia igitur diabolus hominem superaverat inducendo eum ad peccatum, homo servituti diaboli addictus erat. —Secundo, quantum ad reatum poenae, quo homo erat obligatus secundum Dei justitiam. Et haec est servitus quaedam: ad servitum enim pertinet quod aliquis patitur quod non vult, cum liberi hominis sit uti seipso ut vult.*²⁸

In a further analysis of the same idea, he states:

Dicendum quod homo peccando obligatus erat et Deo et diabolo. Quantum ratione culpae non erat factus servus Dei; sed potius, a Dei servitute recedens, diaboli servitum incurerat, Deo juste hoc permittente propter offensam in summo iudici, diabolo autem tamquam tortori. . . . Et ideo per respectum ad

²⁶ *Summa*, I-II, q. 87, a. 3. Cf. also *Cont. Gent.*, III, c. 158. As expressed by Prat: "Adam's disobedience brought death upon him from his earthly paradise and caused the fatal sentence of death to be passed upon him and his race." *Theology of St. Paul*, p. 58, vol. II.

²⁷ Cf. Hugon, *Le Mystere de la Redemption*, p. 10.

²⁸ *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 4.

Deum justitia exigebat quod homo redimeretur: non autem per respectum, ad diabolum.²⁹

By virtue of this two-fold obligation man was not only responsible for the offense given God, but in accordance with divine justice, was also strictly bound to repair the injury and to suffer the penalty incurred. It is true that in man's relations with God there cannot be a strict justice *secundum aequalitatem*. Nevertheless, while there is no commutative justice in God as such, a form of commutative justice is preserved in divine retribution, namely, by His rewarding good and punishing evil. Likewise, when something is due God from divine justice, He Himself can do nothing to dismiss it as such. The reason for this is that God can do nothing that is not in accord with His wisdom and goodness, and consequently whatever is done by Him is done according to a proper order and proportion wherein is found the basis for justice.³⁰

Unde sicut dicitur Deus bonus, in quantum suam bonitatem communicat, ita dicitur justus, in quantum in suis effectibus ordinem servat, et unius ad alterum et omnium ad seipsum.³¹

Although God cannot be said to be a debtor to another, He is in a certain way, nevertheless, a debtor to Himself, so that He does what becomes Himself as God. Hence He is just, for He is in Himself Justice. And justice, over and above God's goodness, provides a certain order of equality relative to good and to evil.

Actus enim peccati facit hominem reum poenae, in quantum transgreditur ordinem divinae justitiae; ad quem non redit nisi per quamdam reparationem poenae, quae ad aequalitatem justitiae reducit; ut scilicet qui plus voluntati suae indulset quam debuit, contra mandatum Dei agens, secundum ordinem divinae justitiae, aliquid contra illud quod vellet, spontaneus vel invitatus patiatur. . . .

Unde macula peccati ab homine tolli non potest nisi voluntas nominis ordinem justitiae divinae acceptet, ut scilicet vel ipse poenam sibi spontaneus assumat in reparationem culpae praeteritae, vel etiam a Deo illatam patienter sustineat; utroque enim modo poena rationem satisfactionis habet. . . .

Dicendum est ergo quod, remota macula culpae, potest quidem remanere reatus non poenae simpliciter, sed satisfactoriae.³²

In this satisfactory punishment, defined by the Angelic Doctor above, a certain equality of justice is maintained insofar as the one who satisfies subjects himself to the will of God by His voluntary acceptance and offering of the punishment due sin as an

²⁹ *Ibid.*, ad 2um.

³⁰ Cf. *Summa*, I, q. 21, a. 1, and a. 4.

Further, this justice is not contradictory of God's mercy; "Misericordia non tollit justitiam, sed est quaedam justitiae plenitudo." *Summa*, I, q. 21, a. 3, ad 2um. A work of divine justice therefore always presupposes a work of mercy and is founded thereupon. Cf. *Ibid.*, a. 1, ad 2um.

³¹ *IV. Sent.*, d. 46, q. 1, a. 1. Cf. *Ibid.*, d. 15, a. 3.

³² *Summa*, I-II, q. 87, a. 6.

adequate reparation for the offense given the Divine Majesty. In other words, given the wilful violation of God's moral law, the lack of obedience, love, and honor that rightfully belongs to Him as Lord of the Universe,—in a word, sin,—then it follows that there is to be given in return a more solemn and sincere affirmation of His supreme authority, as well as proof of a new compensating love and obedience.³³

Sin, preceding in a certain way the punishment it merits, is in its essence a disorder between human and divine wills, a disruption in the moral order of things as constituted by God, through the free will of the creature. In order to have the reparation for this offense made worthily and perfectly, God Himself, without being in any way held, forced, or necessitated, so willed that it should be accomplished through Jesus Christ, the God-Man. And herein lies the *raison d'être* of both the Incarnation and the Passion.³⁴

In quantum vero Deum nobis placavit, dicitur nos redemisse, sicut pretium solvens satisfactionis pro nobis, ut a poena et a peccato liberemur.³⁵

Christ in His satisfaction, therefore, made possible men's liberation from the obligations attendant upon sin and its punishment. For this reason was the penalty or price considered as the *cause* for Christ's death, in the sense that death had been ordained by God as the penalty to be suffered. In His suffering the penalty, that which was taken from God by sin is given back in a wholly voluntary reparation; the honor that was violated is now repaired, the love and obedience that was withheld is returned, the divine justice is compensated.

Licet diabolus injuste invaserit hominem, tamen homo propter peccatum juste erat sub servitute diaboli derelictus a Deo. Et ideo conveniens fuit ut per justitiam homo a servitute diaboli liberaretur, Christo satisfaciente pro ipso per suam passionem.³⁶

Quam quidem poenam si propria voluntate a se exegerit, per hoc Deo "satisfacere" dicitur: in quantum cum labore et poena ordinem divinitus institutum consequitur, pro peccato se puniendo. . . .³⁷

³³ Even as the judge of temporal affairs is obliged, for the good of the community, to exact satisfaction for a violation, so too should the Supreme Judge proclaim and enforce His eternal right that He, as God, be loved above all things. "Ex amore increato bonitatis divinae procedit misericordia in quantum bonum est suscipere diffusivum, et procedit justitia in quam Bonum Supremum bonum Jus ut diligatur super omnia." Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, p. 394.

³⁴ Cf. Rivière, *Étude Historique*, p. 496.

³⁵ St. Thomas, *III Sent.*, d. 18, a. 4.

Christ freed men from both the *reatum culpae* et *poenae* because the price He paid was in itself sufficient to remove both, i.e., His satisfaction was of an infinite value. De facto, the punishment due to the sins of men is not removed unless they apply to themselves the satisfaction of Christ through the Sacraments, etc. (See the section following on the "qualities" of Christ's satisfaction.)

³⁶ *Summa*, III, q. a. 3, ad 3um.

³⁷ *Cont. Gent.*, III, c. 168.

However, since the sin committed has its origin and responsibility in man and not Christ, it is a foregone conclusion that the reparation due should likewise come from man. Some positive action, or at least an intimate sharing in the reparatory act, is quite necessary on the part of man as the actual offender. So too must the form or mode of this reparation to be given by man (either directly or through one in whose actions he really participates) comprise the elements of expiating the punishment incurred, and of repairing the offense given; hence an act that will be both expiatory and reparatory. As already indicated, the former concerns the material aspect, the punishment demanded by the justice of God; the latter concerns the moral aspect, the offense given to God's honor.

Further, since the essential element of sin is to be found in the disruption it causes in the moral order, to expiate alone is not properly to repair or to satisfy in the real sense of the term as already explained. It is precisely this moral element involved so essentially in sin that not only permits, but demands a moral act in order that true reparation be effected. The mode this reparation assumes is called satisfaction properly, and consequently differs from mere expiation which can be termed *satisfactio*.³⁸

And herein are to be found the two aspects embraced in the Thomistic concept of vicarious satisfaction, namely, man's participation in the Saviour's death, and His offering of it as a supreme act of love and obedience. The explicit application of *satisfaction* to the Passion and Death of Christ is given by the Angelic Doctor in question 48, article 2, of the third part of the *Summa*. Although St. Thomas understands and interprets the satisfaction of Christ as analogical, its strict and proper sense is nevertheless retained, so that it is to be understood in the same way as man attributes to God the terms of being, love, freedom, and life. Wherefore, in the words of St. Thomas:

Dicendum quod ille proprie satisfacit pro offensa qui exhibet offensa id quod aeque vel magis diligit quam oderit offensam. Christus autem, ex caritate et obedientia patiendo, minus aliquid Deo exhibuit quam exigeret recompensatio totius offensae humani generis. Primo quidem, propter magnitudinem caritatis ex qua patiebatur. Secundo, propter dignitatem vitae suae, quam pro satisfactione ponebat, quae erat vita Dei et hominis. Tertio, propter generalitatem passionis et magnitudinem doloris assumpti. . . . Et ideo passio Christi, non solum sufficiens, sed etiam superabundans satisfactio fuit pro peccatis humani generis. . . .³⁹

That this was actually accomplished in the death of Christ upon the Cross, an action in which all humanity satisfied by virtue of a mystical, but real solidarity, provides the subject-matter for another

³⁸ Cf. Rivière, *Étude Théologique*, pp. 169-181.

³⁹ *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 2.

Cf. Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, p. 391.

"Sic Sociniani dixerunt: Christus pro nobis satisfacit improprie tantum et metaphorice. . . . unde negant satisfactionem vicariam proprie dictam." Garrigou-Lagrange, *ibid.*, p. 415.

chapter. However, mention must be made here of two other aspects which are usually considered in conjunction with the satisfaction and its vicarious nature. The first concerns the quality or perfection of Christ's satisfaction, referred to in the conclusion of the above article as *non solum sufficiens sed superabundans*. The second aspect involves the complex question of the necessity of satisfaction, considered: 1) in itself, i.e., whether or not it was necessary for the removal of sin and in what way; 2) in its relation to the God-Man, i.e., whether or not it was necessary for a Divine Person to assume human nature in order to satisfy; 3) whether or not it was necessary for Christ to suffer the death of the Cross in order to atone for sin.

The latter questions concerning necessity do not as such pertain to the vicarious mode of Christ's satisfaction; indeed, their peculiar difficulties and problems are in themselves sufficient to warrant an entirely separate commentary. The same may be said for the perfection and superabundance of Christ's satisfaction, for these may be looked upon as pertaining to the inherent characteristics of His work of reparation, which in turn may be considered apart from its vicarious nature, and its motives of obedience and love relative to God and man.

The limited scope of this treatise therefore does not warrant, nor does it permit, a detailed expose of the perfection and necessity of the Saviour's satisfaction as embodied in the theology of St. Thomas. A brief commentary, however, will be of advantage towards the attainment of a unified and complete presentation of the Thomistic concept in itself. The following sections of this chapter then are presented rather as explanatory statements than analytical demonstrations.

The values or perfection of Christ's satisfaction.

The equality of justice implied in satisfaction is a formal or moral equality measured according to the value of the price paid in reparation for the offense. The value of the price given by Christ was, according to St. Thomas, not only sufficient, but superabundant, i.e., the satisfaction of Christ was of a perfect and infinite value.

... aliqua satisfactio potest dici dupliciter sufficiens. Uno modo, perfecte: quia est condigna per quamdam adaequationem ad recompensationem commissae culpa. Et sic hominis puri satisfactio sufficiens esse non potuit: quia tota natura humana erat per peccatum corrupta. . . . Tum etiam quia peccatum contra Deum commissum quandam infinitatem habet ex infinitate divinae maiestatis: tanto enim offensa est gravior, quanto maior est ille in quem delinquitur. . . .

Alio modo potest dici satisfactio sufficiens imperfecte: scilicet secundum acceptationem eius qui est ea contentus, quamvis non sit condigna. Et hoc modo satisfactio puri hominis est sufficiens.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ *Summa*, III, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2um.

Satisfaction then is said to be perfectly sufficient when it is perfect in respect to the matter concerned (*condigna*) so that the recompense given is equal (*adaequatio*) to the offense committed. Likewise, when the conditions listed below prevail, the satisfaction is said to be a rigorous satisfaction, since it is perfectly sufficient in respect to the form or manner in which it is made, and accordingly, strict justice is thereby fulfilled. The conditions required are:

a.) The satisfaction must be given to another—*ad alterum*.
b.) It must proceed from the proper and personal actions of the one satisfying—*ex bonis propriis*.

c.) It cannot be claimed by another title on the part of the person to whom it is given—*ex bonis alio titulo non debitis*.

d.) It must not be such so that it will fall under the proper dominion of him to whom it is given—*ex bonis sub dominio creditoris non contentis*.

e.) The one to whom it is given must be obliged to accept—*omni obligatione acceptandi*.

Finally, satisfaction is said to be imperfectly sufficient (*congrua*) when, in respect to the matter, it is sufficient only insofar as the receiver has decided to accept it such as it is.

According to the Thomist, since the moral value in a satisfactory work is to be considered in relation to the dignity of the person satisfying as well as to the dignity or worth of what is offered, it follows that from the infinite dignity of Christ, or by virtue of the hypostatic union, there results the infinite value of His work of satisfaction. In other words, the value of satisfactory actions is to be measured not only according to the use of the natural and supernatural powers of the one satisfying, but also according to the dignity of his person. In Christ the personal principle which perfects the work of Redemption through human nature is the Infinite Son of God. Consequently, the reparation given by Him is perfect, or of infinite value; it is so proportioned to the offense that as much or more of the honor is restored to God as was taken away by sin.⁴¹

The arguments proposed by the Thomists are based fundamentally upon the *certain infinity* of sin, so that if a condign satisfaction is to obtain, the infinite efficacy of the satisfaction demanded can and must come from Jesus Christ, because He alone, existing as God and Man, is capable of offering a condign reparation.

... peccatum contra Deum commissum quandam infinitatem habet ex infinitate divinae maiestatis; tanto enim offensa est gravior, quanto maior est ille in quem delinquitur. Unde oportuit, ad condignam satisfactionem, ut actus satisfaciens haberet efficaciam infinitam, ut puta Dei et hominis existens.⁴²

⁴¹ Cf. Diekamp, *De Redemptore*, II, p. 361.

⁴² *Summa*, III, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2um.

Or, as stated again in reference to Christ's human nature:

Dicendum quod Christus voluit genus humanum a peccatis liberare, non sola potestate, sed etiam iustitia. Et ideo non solum attendit quantum virtutem dolor ejus haberet ex divinitate unita; sed etiam quantum dolor ejus sufficeret secundum humanam naturam, ad tantam satisfactionem.⁴³

Finally, in reference again to the human nature and the divine Person, the Angelic Doctor states:

Dicendum quod dignitas carnis Christi non est aestimanda solum secundum carnis naturam, sed secundum personam assumentem, in quantum erat caro Dei: ex quo habebat dignitatem infinitam.⁴⁴

The argumentation is somewhat delicate, but its cogency is readily recognized when the argument is couched in the form of syllogistic reasoning:

A mortal sin has a certain infinity as an offense against God.

And condign satisfaction must be an adequate reparation; therefore a condign satisfaction must have an infinite efficacy, as such an act would have when performed by the God-Man, Jesus Christ.

The proof for the major rests upon the fact that the gravity of an offense is measured according to the dignity of the person offended; while the value of the reparatory action is likewise measured according to the dignity of the one repairing.

The minor is proved by reverting to the definition for condign satisfaction which, according to St. Thomas, is one that pleases the offended equally as much, or more, than the offense shall have displeased him. This prevails most certainly in the satisfaction given by Christ in which He offered to the Father the suffering and death of the Cross out of divine love and obedience.

The infinite value of Christ's satisfaction therefore proceeds from the fact that He, as the Word of God made flesh, is divine and infinite. And the value of any satisfaction is to be looked for in the person as the subject of the act of reparation; hence the axiom: *honor est in honorante*. The worthier the person, the greater is the value of the satisfaction. Therefore, the obedience and love offered God by the Word Incarnate, since they are the theandric acts⁴⁵ of a

⁴³ *Ibid.*, q. 46, a. 6, ad 6um.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, q. 48, a. 2, ad 3um.

⁴⁵ The meaning of a 'theandric act' is given by St. Thomas as follows: *divinum-humanam, non per aliquam confusionem operationum seu virtutum visilem, vel que naturae, sed per hoc quod divina operatio eius utitur humanam virtutem utriusque, et humana operatio participat virtutem divinae operationis.* *Summa*, III, q. 19, a. 1, ad lum.

However, the commentary of Garrigou-Lagrange, from which the greater part of this material has been taken, includes the following observation: "Tunc sunt duae operationes subordinatae: tactus qui potest esse sine miraculo, et

Divine Person, are of infinite value, and the satisfaction given is condign, or perfect.

The reasons given by St. Thomas for the superabundant value of Christ's satisfaction are contained in question 48, article 2, already cited in full, namely, the greatness of His theandric love, the dignity of the life He gave in reparation, and the magnitude of His Passion. From these reasons it follows that the infinity of Christ's satisfaction must be of a higher, more excellent, and of a more perfect order than the infinity of the offense inflicted by sin. Sin remains in the moral order and only insofar as it gives offense morally relative to the dignity of the person offended, can it be said to be infinite. But Christ's satisfaction is infinite by virtue of the hypostatic union itself. It is not possible therefore for such a unique union not to effect a far more excellent mode of infinity than the moral infinity of sin. Consequently, the satisfaction of Christ was not only perfect, but superabundant.⁴⁶

Contrary to the opinions of some theologians, the Thomists maintain further that the satisfaction of Christ is superabundant and of

activa sanatio miraculosa, procedens a Deo ut a causa principali et ab humanitate Christi, ut a causa instrumentali.

"Addendum tamen est quod solet etiam ipsa sola actio voluntatis humanae Christo vocari alio sensu theandricam, propter valorem infinitum quem habuit a proposito vocari agente ut quod. Sic dicitur quod actus meritorii et satisfactorii Christi erant actus theandrici, in hoc sensu quod procedebant simul ab ejus voluntate humana et ab ejus personalitate divina. Et haec est essentia ipsius mysterii Redemptionis: valor infinitus horum actuum theandricorum Christi, qui dicuntur theandrici ratione suppositi seu personae divinae Verbi incarnati, quae operatur per sanctissimam Christi animam." *De Christo Salvatore*, p. 387.

Again, in reference to the infinite value of Christ's satisfaction, Garrigou-Lagrange states clearly: "Notandum est insuper quod in operationibus theandricis Christi est ordo realis et intrinsecus ad objectum a quo specificantur et ad principium a quo eliciuntur. Principium quod elicit hos actus est, in Christo, suppositum divinum seu Persona Divina Verbi, et principium quo eliciuntur hi actus est ipsa natura humana, per facultates et habitus seu virtutes et dona. "Haec principia quo sunt physice finita et sic, in operibus Christi hominis, nulla est infinitas physica. Sed quoad valorem moralem hic valor moralis potest sumi aut ex objecto plus minusve nobili (sic dolorosa passio Christi est magis meritoria obiective quam aliae ejus operationes), aut ex subjecto elicente, et hunc valorem dicimus esse moraliter infinitum ab intrinseco, scilicet ratione suppositi, licet haec operationes Christi attingant suum objectum modo finito. Sic dicitur valor personalis omnium actuum caritatis Christi, a valore eorum obiectivo plus minusve elevato." *Ibid.*, p. 422.

Wherefore the act of Christ's love in offering Himself upon the cross is an act of morally infinite value, precisely because it is theandric. Even as the habitual grace of Christ can be said to be infinite, so too is His love: ". . . gratia haec habitualis Christi ratione conjunctionis ad Cerbum est principium quo operationis meritoriae et satisfactoriae valoris intrinsece et simpliciter infiniti. Haec infinitas licet sit a persona divina ut a principio quod, refunditur tamen moraliter et secundum aestimationem in ipsam gratiam habitalem quae est principium quo hujus actionis meritoriae valoris stricte et intrinsece infiniti." *Ibid.*, p. 213. Cf. *Summa*, III, q. 7, a. 11.

⁴⁶ Tanqueray, *op. cit.*, p. 766.

infinite value *simpliciter ab intrinsiceco*, and exclusive therefore of a gratuitous acceptance on the part of God. This is a further analysis of the precise mode in which the satisfaction of Christ is said to be of infinite value. In a word, its infinite value is made possible not in virtue of a gratuitous acceptance on the part of God, but in virtue of the divine *suppositum* or the divine Person of the Word.

The principles involved in the demonstration of this tenet are those which concern the person as the possessor or source of actions (*principium quod*), and the nature from which these actions flow (*principium quo*). In Christ, however, the *principium quod* is the Divine Person of the Word, while the *principium quo* through which these acts are elicited is His human nature. It is admitted that in the works of Christ as man there can be no physical infinity, but the same cannot be said in regard to their moral value. This moral value is taken from the subject Himself who is responsible for, and alone elicits them. In this case it follows that the moral value of these actions is morally infinite *ab intrinsiceco*, namely, by reason of the divine *suppositum*, even though those operations attain their object in a finite way. The value of actions then must be considered relative to the *principium quo*, but especially to the dignity of the Person responsible for the actions. Given the infinite dignity of the Person of Christ, it follows that His operations, despite their finite mode of attaining their object, have an infinite moral value, for moral actions are always from the person by virtue of their intrinsic relation to the person who freely elicits them.⁴⁷

Whether or not the five conditions cited above for a rigorous satisfaction (*in rigore justitiae*) are perfectly fulfilled in regard to the satisfaction of Christ is controverted. According to the school of the Thomists, the satisfaction given by Christ was perfect not only in matter, but in its form, i.e., *in rigore justitiae*. A brief summary of the aforementioned conditions as applied to the reparation of Christ follows:

Christ is able to give satisfaction *ad alterum* because of the distinction of natures. The unique Person of Christ insofar as it determines His human nature can make satisfaction, and conversely, given the divine nature, it can also receive satisfaction.

Christ is able to satisfy *ex bonis propriis alio titulo non debitis et sub dominio creditoris non contentis* because the moral value of His actions proceeded from the Person of the Word subsisting in human nature, according to the axiom: *actiones sunt suppositorum*. Human nature, it is true, receives all the goods it possesses from God Himself, and human actions, both physical and moral, belong to God. Moral acts however, presuppose freedom, and insofar as the human, satis-

⁴⁷ Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, pp. 421-422. Among others, Durandus and Scotus admit the infinite value of Christ's satisfaction only *ab extrinseco*.

factory actions of Christ were given freely, they are properly under the dominion of Christ.

Hæc satisfactio facta est ex bonis propriis (scilicet, personae divinae in natura humana), alio titulo non debitis (non alio titulo debitum est dolorosum holocaustum) et sub dominio creditoris non contentis quia opera humana meritoria et satisfactoria Christi non erant sub dominio proprio Dei creditoris, sed sub dominio proprio Christi hominis, quatenus erant libera: et non erant nisi sub dominio generali Dei.⁴⁸

Finally, the condition that the receiver of this satisfaction must be held to accept it is also fulfilled. Christ was by divine ordination constituted the Redeemer of mankind. To refuse acceptance of the satisfaction God Himself inspired would be an act of contradiction and consequently impossible. In this sense the necessity is not absolute on the part of God, but hypothetical.⁴⁹

The satisfaction given by Christ was, therefore, not only sufficient but superabundant, at once perfect and of infinite value in both matter and form. These qualities may be summarized briefly according to the following schema:

Summa, III, q. 48, a. 2: Ille proprie satisfacit pro offensa qui exhibet offenso id quod aequè vel magis diligit, quam oderit offensam.

⁴⁸ Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, p. 428.

Diekamp states clearly: "At ille, qui humanam naturam possidet, est ipse Filius Dei, cujus propria ab aeterno sunt ac semper manent omnia bona, quae tali naturae sunt communicata. Omnia igitur, quae ut homo satisfactione vicaria vice nostra praestat atque divinitati, proinde etiam sibi ipsi ut Deo offert, proprie et vere ex bonis propriis praestat et offert. Erant bona propria, quorum oblatione Christus ex rigore justitiae Patri satisfacit."

"Bona illa, quae offerendo Christus satisfacit, scilicet sanguis ac vita ejus, erant bona infiniti valoris sub dominio ejus posita. Cui non contrariatur absolutum Dei dominium super omnes res actionesque creatas. Etenim actiones humanae Christi, in quantum a suo principio quo procedentes actiones creatae sunt, dominio quidem divino subsunt. At in quantum a suo principio quod, scilicet a persona Filii Dei procedunt, tali dominio non subjiuntur; et voluntas humana, qua Christus satisfacit, humanum dominium in actu satisfactorios non exercet nisi sub influxu principii quod, quod est infinitum. Est ergo ipsa persona divina, quae humana voluntate dominium in actu satisfactorios humanos exercet. Qui actus, in quantum a persona divina procedentes actiones ipsius Dei sunt, quodcumque dominium superius excludunt." Diekamp, *Theologiae Dogmaticae Manuale*, II, p. 363.

⁴⁹ Opposed to this view among others are the opinions of Vasquez, Molina, and Billot.

The satisfaction of Christ was made *in rigore justitiae commutativae*: "Ad actum justitiae commutativae requiruntur et sufficiunt duo, scilicet stricta obligatio ad solvendum debitum et perfecta aequalitas pretii cum debito. Atqui ita fuit quia satisfactio Christi fuit non solum aequalis, sed superabundans, et Christus tenebatur ad eam quia constitutus erat ut fidejussor et Redemptor hominum. Ergo in hac satisfactione emmenter invenitur quiddam ad justitiam commutativam requiritur." Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, p. 429.

aeque

sufficiens (*Summa*, III, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2um)

perfect in matter

(condign)

perfect in form

(rigorous)

of infinite value

ab intrinseco

magis

superabundans (*Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 2)
by reason of the love, dignity, and
passion of Christ

The necessity of satisfaction.

The final aspect to be considered in regard to the satisfaction of Christ concerns the not less involved question of its necessity. Was satisfaction absolutely necessary despite the gravity of sin? Was it not possible for one other than Christ to satisfy? Even granted the necessity of the Incarnation, was it necessary that the God-Man suffer the death of the Cross? These questions, in the order given, will provide the three-fold division to be followed in giving the statements of St. Thomas, namely:

- 1.) Was satisfaction in itself necessary?
- 2.) Was it necessary that a Divine Person incarnate satisfy?
- 3.) Was the Passion and Death necessary?

Given the fact that God willed man's liberation from sin, satisfaction in itself was not absolutely necessary, nor would God have impaired His justice had He willed not to exact it. It was, however, greatly fitting (necessity *secundum quid*) that human nature should be repaired through a satisfactory work of reparation.⁵⁰

... si voluisset absque omni satisfactione hominem a peccato liberare, contra iustitiam non fecisset. Ille enim iudex non potest, salva iustitia, culpam sive poenam dimittere, qui habet punire culpam in alium commissam, puta vel in alium hominem, vel in totam rempublicam, sive in superiorem principem. Sed Deus non habet aliquem superiorem, sed ipse est supremum et commune bonum totius universi. Et ideo, si dimittat peccatum, quod habet rationem culpae ex eo quod contra ipsum committitur, nulli facit injuriam: sicut quicumque homo remittit offensam in se commissam absque satisfactione, misericorditer, et non iniuste agit.⁵¹

Apart from satisfaction, therefore, God, by virtue of His omnipotence and since He Himself was the offended, remained entirely

⁵⁰ Necessity is distinguished as follows: *simpliciter* necessity implies that the end cannot be obtained otherwise; a *secundum quid* necessity implies that the required in order that the end be attained in a more congruous and fitting manner.

⁵¹ *Summa*, III, q. 46, a. 2, ad 3um.

"Deus enim per suam omnipotentem virtutem poterat humanam naturam multis aliis modis reparare." *Ibid.*, q. 1, a. 2.

free to condone sin. He could, if He so willed, have dismissed it according to any one of the numerous modes of liberation at His command, and thereby grant a full pardon to the guilty without a satisfactory reparation. Nor can it be said that God, had He chosen not to exact satisfaction, would be involved in the contradiction of preventing or refusing that which His divine justice demands. A strict satisfaction, or the suffering of a punishment, is not always necessary in order to insure justice, if the offended person wills otherwise. God, as the Supreme Lawmaker and King can, in any particular case, show clemency and waive the punishment due, particularly when signs of true repentance are indicated on the part of the offender. When and if He so acts, He is said to act with infinite mercy, His justice meanwhile remaining unimpaired.

Although satisfaction in itself was not strictly necessary, it was assuredly more fitting that it be given in reparation for sin. The reasons for this fitness are stated by St. Thomas as follows:

Congrum etiam fuit quod natura humana per satisfactionem repararetur. Primo, ex parte Dei, quia in hoc divina iustitia manifestatur quod culpa per poenam diluitur. Secundo, ex parte hominis, qui satisfaciens perfectus intelligatur. . . Tertio, etiam ex parte universi, ut scilicet culpa per poenam satisfactionis ordinetur et sic nihil inordinatum in universo remaneat.⁵²

In addition to the conclusion that satisfaction is not *simpliciter* necessary, St. Thomas also maintains that, given the divine ordination to exact satisfaction, the Incarnation of the Son of God was not absolutely necessary in order to make this satisfaction possible, but again extremely fitting. The Incarnation can be said to be necessary only in the hypothesis that God willed to exact an integral or con-dign satisfaction which man as a finite creature could never give.

Primo modo (sine quo aliquid esse non potest), Deum incarnari non fuit necessarium ad reparationem humanae naturae; Deus enim per suam omnipotentem virtutem poterat humanam naturam aliis modis reparare. Secundo autem modo (per quod melius et convenientius pervenitur ad finem) necessarium fuit Deum incarnari ad humanae naturae reparationem.⁵³

That there were at God's command numerous modes of liberation from sin, exclusive of the Incarnation, cannot be denied. Equally true is it that, even though the Incarnation and the consequent reparation of the human race would increase the accidental and external glory of God, He remains, nevertheless, most sufficient unto Himself and requires no such accidental glorification.

Proceeding from the singular fact that God willed man's liberation from sin, the Incarnation, according to St. Thomas, is said to be *secundum quid* necessary, as a better and more fitting means to attain that end. The reasons given are:

⁵² *III Sent.*, d. 20, q. 1, a. 1.

⁵³ *Summa*, III, q. 1, a. 2.

- 1.) The Incarnation provides man with a greater incentive to good—Primo quidem, quantum ad finem, quae magis certificatur ex hoc quod ipsi Deo loquenti credit. . . . Secundo, quantum ad spem, quae per hoc maxime erigitur. Tertio, quantum ad caritatem, quae maxima per hoc excitatur. . . . Quarto, quantum ad rectam operationem, in qua nobis exemplum se praebuit. . . . Quinto, quantum ad plenam participationem divinitatis, quae vere est hominis beatitudo, et finis humanae vitae.
- 2.) The Incarnation helps man to avoid evil—Primo enim per hoc homo instruitur ne sibi diabolum praeferat. . . . Secundo, quia per hoc instruitur quanta sit dignitas humanae naturae. . . . Tertio, quia, ad praesumptionem hominis tollendam. . . . Quarto, quia superbia hominis. . . . redargui potest atque sanari. . . . Quinto, ad liberandum hominum a servitute.⁵⁴

But, given the divine will to exact a perfect satisfaction for the offense given by sin, then the Incarnation was strictly necessary for the reasons here given by St. Thomas:

Et sic hominis puri satisfactio sufficiens esse non potuit: quia tota natura humana erat per peccatum corrupta. . . . Tum etiam quia peccatum contra Deum commissum quandam infinitatem habet ex infinitate divinae majestatis: tanto enim offensae est gravior, quanto major est ille in quem delinquitur. Unde oportuit, ad condignam satisfactionem, ut actio satisfaciens haberet efficaciam infinitam, ut puta Dei et hominis existens.⁵⁵

Then near the end of the article he states:

Homo autem purus satisfacere non poterat pro toto humano genere: Deus autem satisfacere non debebat: unde oportebat Deum et hominem esse Jesum Christum.⁵⁶

That man, designated as *homo purus* (without reference to the virtue of chastity) by the Angelic Doctor, was wholly incapable of returning a condign satisfaction follows from the fact that, through Adam's sin, the entire and complete human nature is so corrupted that of itself it cannot rise. While it is true that his natural powers remain intact, man is nevertheless incapable of acting supernaturally in the sense that his nature now lacks the proportion necessary between his actions and the life of grace and eternal salvation; wherefore he could not be a cause of grace. Likewise does the *certain infinity* of mortal sin make it impossible for a creature of God to offer an adequate satisfaction in recompense. Sin, inasmuch as it is an act of a creature, is finite, but relative to God whose honor the act violates, it is infinite.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*; cf. also Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-43.
⁵⁵ *Summa*, III, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2um.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, a. 2, in reference to the equality demanded by perfect satisfaction:

“Medium justitiae est aequalitas quae constituitur inter illos inter quos est alterius excellentiam: sicut inter filium et patrem, inter hominem et Deum.”
⁵⁷ Cf. Dickamp, *De Redemptore*, II, p. 194. Cf. also St. Thomas, *Comp. Theol.*

c. 200; Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-48.

Nullus autem homo purus tantum esse poterat, qui posset satisfacere sufficienter Deo, poenam voluntariam aliquam assumendo, etiam pro peccato proprio, nedum pro peccato universorum. . . . Oportuit igitur ut esset aliquis homo infinitae dignitatis, qui poenam subiret pro omnibus.⁵⁸

Redemption through a divine Person therefore is hypothetically necessary, given original sin, and granted that God freely willed (as de facto He did) to exact an adequate reparation while at the same time capable of condoning, or of accepting an inadequate satisfaction.

Finally, was it then necessary that Christ satisfy through the Passion and Death of the Cross? The Angelic Doctor states the doctrine of the Church in maintaining that such a mode of satisfaction was not absolutely necessary, and this for the evident reason that any least suffering or act of Christ would in itself have been perfectly sufficient. However, given the preknowledge and preordination of God concerning the Passion, then it was not possible for man to be freed from sin in any other way. As Prat puts it, “Christ was delivered by God on account of our sins, which His death alone, in the present providential order, could expiate.”⁵⁹

In the words of St. Thomas:

Dicendum quod, secundum sufficientiam, una minima passio Christi sufficit ad redimendum genus humanum ab omnibus peccatis.⁶⁰

Simpliciter igitur et absolute loquendo, possibile fuit Deo alio modo hominem liberare quam per passionem Christi. . . . Sed ex aliqua suppositione facta fuit impossibile. . . . supposita praesentia et praedestinatione Dei de passione Christi, non erat simul possibile Christum non pati, et hominem alio modo quam per ejus passionem liberari.⁶¹

St. Thomas reaches the conclusion, however, that Redemption through the suffering and death of Christ is also the more fitting means of liberating man from sin than through the will of God alone—and this for several reasons: the greatness of God's love for man incites in him a love in return; Christ gives mankind the great example of obedience, humility, and justice; Christ not only freed men from sin, but merited for them the grace of justification; man recognized more readily the necessity of avoiding sin; men, in the death of Christ, were enabled to conquer the devil and to overcome death itself.⁶²

St. Thomas enumerates still other reasons for the fitness of Christ's death by crucifixion: Christ gave the example of virtue; the tree of

⁵⁸ St. Thomas, *Opusc.*, III, c. 7.

⁵⁹ Prat, *Theology of St. Paul*, II, p. 209.

Note: The necessity of the Passion and Death relative to Christ's freedom in His obedience to the Father will be considered in the next chapter.

⁶⁰ *Summa*, III, q. 46, a. 5, ad 3um.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, a. 2.

⁶² *Ibid.*, a. 3.

the forbidden fruit as the means used by Satan for his temptation to sin becomes the Cross of salvation; His death upon the elevated Cross prepared the way for man's ascent into Heaven; His outstretched arms signified the universality of redemption; death upon the Cross signified the many figures found in the Old Testament.⁶³

The reparation offered to God by Christ the Redeemer was therefore a real work of satisfaction, for it repaired the offense given God, satisfied His divine justice, and restored the moral order violated by sin. It was, further, a satisfaction at once infinitely perfect and superabundant; it was in this satisfaction that there was made manifest the infinite wisdom of God "... who found the means of reconciling all the exigencies of His justice with all the inclinations of His mercy; for the Redemption is at once a mystery of justice and of love."⁶⁴

⁶³ *Ibid.*, a. 4.

⁶⁴ Hugon, *Le Mystère de la Rédemption*, pp. 54-55.

CHAPTER THREE

THE MODE OF THE SATISFACTION OF CHRIST

1. *Status Questionis.*

Thus far the theological notion of satisfaction has been defined, analysed, and applied to the Passion and Death of Christ, together with a brief commentary on the perfection and necessity of Christ's satisfaction. It will be the purpose of this chapter to complete the Thomistic concept of vicarious satisfaction by demonstrating the fact of Christ's satisfaction as found in Sacred Scripture and Tradition, and of analyzing the precise mode or manner in which Christ accomplished His redemptive work of satisfaction, that is, its vicarious nature, and the motives of love and obedience that characterized the death of Christ.

It should be restated here that the vicarious satisfaction of Christ is but one aspect of the dogma of the Redemption. Mention has already been made of the other three principal aspects incorporated in the *Summa*, namely, those of merit, sacrifice, and redemption or liberation. The four aspects are not, therefore, to be considered as individually exclusive of each other, but on the contrary, as convenient and scientific expressions mutually inclusive, of the one, same reality.¹

Question 48 of part three of the *Summa* contains the essence of the Thomistic doctrine of the Redemption.² Despite the charges of some that there is a lack of order and unity in the treatment of St. Thomas concerning the various aspects of the Redemption, an objective inquiry and impartial examination cannot but furnish the reader with convictive evidence that, to the contrary, there is contained in the analysis of St. Thomas a definitely progressive and unified procedure.

In his analysis of the Redemption, the Angelic Doctor, in accordance with the testimony of Sacred Scripture and Tradition, proceeds from the primary, essential, and fundamental truth that the work of Redemption is, above all things else, a work of infinite, divine love. Since the distinctive characteristic of any work of love or charity is

¹ Reference may be made here to the synthesis given by Janssens: the offense given God by original sin results in a state of enmity between God and man, and renders man guilty of the offense and its punishment. In the attainment of man's salvation, therefore, the offense must be repaired, God is to be placated, and man thereby liberated. All these are accomplished by the Passion and Death of Christ *per modum satisfactionis, sacrificii, et redemptionis*. Cf. Janssens, *De Deo-Homine*, II, p. 763.

² "Sensus D. Thomae in titulo questionis est, agendum esse de modo quo passio Christi suum effectum operata est. Itaque non hic agitur de modo passionis secundum se, sed de modo quo infuit in effectum. Ex hac occasione, tractat hic D. Thomas de merito et satisfactione Christi, et de redemptione nostra." *Summa*, III, q. 48, Introductio, note 1 (ed. Marietti).

that of its meritorious value, St. Thomas begins quite logically by analyzing the Redemption as the *cause* of man's salvation *per modum meriti*. A work that is meritorious, however, will also become satisfactory if it is difficult or laborious in nature, and if it is willingly offered as the reparation for an offense. The consideration of merit prior to that of satisfaction is the logical and theologically accurate procedure for the reason that, while any act of real satisfaction is meritorious, not every meritorious action is satisfactory.

Further, a meritorious and satisfactory act is not always a sacrifice, in the proper sense of the word, but, given a true sacrifice (a holocaust for example), then it follows most certainly that the same sacrificial action will be likewise satisfactory and meritorious. The term *demphio* as used by St. Thomas to indicate another aspect of the Redemption is to be understood in the restricted sense of liberation from the servitude of sin and the devil, while a final mode, that of efficiency, considers the application of the merits and satisfactions gained by Christ. These last two embrace rather the effective aspects of the Redemption, while those of merit, satisfaction, and sacrifice comprise its constitutive elements.

In the second article of question 48 St. Thomas gives a simple and yet vivid theological expression to the very essence of the mystery itself, when he analyzes the cause of man's salvation *per modum satisfactionis*:—Jesus Christ, in His Passion and Death upon the Cross, offered to God a true satisfaction for the sins of mankind, in a vicarious manner, and from the motives of love and obedience.

Ille proprie satisfacit pro offensa qui exhibet offensa id quod aequae vel magis diligit quam oderit offensam. Christus autem, ex caritate et obedientia patienti, maius aliquid Deo exhibuit quam exigeret recompensatio totius offensae humani generis. Primo quidem, propter magnitudinem caritatis, ex qua patiebatur. Secundo, propter dignitatem vitae suae, quam pro satisfactione ponebat, quae erat vita Dei et hominis. Tertio, propter generalitatem passionis et magnitudinem doloris assumpti. . . .³

³ *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 2. In reference to this article Cajetan states: "Titulus clarus ex ipsa satisfactionis ratione, facere siquidem satis, est facere aequale, seu sufficiens debito. Praesupponit namque satisfactio debitum, pro quo satisfactio debita est, et debito praesupposito, tunc satisfit, quando aliquid exhibetur aequivalens debito, vel excedens illud. In proposito, quia ex debito humani generis stat (quoniam et offendit Deum, et obnoxium erat poenae aeternae), quaeritur an passio Christi salvaverit nos per modum satisfactionis, hoc est per modum recompensationis aequale ad minus debito humani generis."

Cajetan, in this same article, further explains that satisfaction can be made in one of two ways: "Adverte hic quod aliquid exhibitum offenso dupliciter potest satisfacere. Primo, ex grata effensi acceptantis illud exhibitum pro sufficienti, quavis illud in se non esset sufficiens pro satisfactione: sicut si rex pro injuria sibi facta acceptet solam petitionem veniae. Alio modo, ex sufficientia ipsius rei exhibitae; quia scilicet illud exhibitum est secundum se tantae bonitatis, amabilis, dignitatis et excellentiae, ut adaequet offensam vel excedat; sicut si pro offensa deberetur libra argenti, et daretur libra auri. In proposito, est sermo de satisfactione secundo modo, hoc est, secundum se."

It is the morally infinite value of the love which Christ expressed in His death by crucifixion that procures the satisfaction due to God. This pleases God more, as St. Thomas states, than all the sins and crimes of both men and demons combined displease Him. The love of Christ is such that it surpasses necessarily the magnitude of the malice of any and every offense committed against God.

Secondly, the satisfaction of Christ was a vicarious satisfaction, or one given by Christ as the divinely-appointed Representative of all mankind, on their behalf:

Dicendum quod caput et membra sunt quasi una persona mystica. Et ideo satisfactio Christi ad omnes fideles pertinet sicut ad sua membra. In quantum etiam duo homines sunt unum in caritate, unus pro alio satisfacere potest. . . .⁴

The final responses of the article are restatements of the dignity of the Person of Christ and of the consequent infinite greatness of His acts—and among these none was greater than the act of charity whereby Christ offered Himself to God the Father on behalf of mankind.

Dicendum quod maior fuit caritas Christi patientis quam malitia crucifigentium. Et ideo plus potuit Christus satisfacere sua passione quam crucifixores offendere occidendo; in quantum quo passio Christi sufficiens fuit, et superabundans, ad satisfaciendum pro peccatis crucifigentium ipsorum.⁵

Dicendum quod peccata carnis Christi non est aestimanda solum secundum carnis naturam, sed secundum personam assumptam, in quantum scilicet erat caro Dei: ex quo habebat dignitatem infinitam.⁶

The complete and proper interpretation of the concept of vicarious satisfaction as proposed in the doctrine of St. Thomas therefore, is that Christ, as the Head of the whole human race, took upon Himself the obligation of satisfying for the sins of that race; secondly, that on behalf of men, out of love and obedience, He willingly sustained the sufferings and punishment due to their sins.⁷

⁴ *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 2, ad 1um.

This statement is given in response to the objection that the actual sinner himself is held to satisfy in the same sense that one is unable to confess for another. In his reply to the objection St. Thomas furnishes evidence for the vicarious nature of the satisfaction of Christ. Other pertinent references will be given later in this chapter when the notion of "vicarious" is analyzed.

The reasons whereby one is able to satisfy for another are given by St. Thomas in III Suppl., q. 13, a. 2. The article itself will be included in the analysis of vicarious satisfaction.

⁵ *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 2, ad 2um.

⁶ *Ibid.*, ad 3um.

⁷ As will be mentioned again later, the vicarious nature of Christ's satisfaction does not imply, much less indicate directly, that Christ accepted the sins of men *formaliter* and *in se*, so that He becomes Himself a sinner; nor does it mean that Christ was punished, if by punishment is understood the evil inflicted in vindication of an offense.

That which offends God in sin is the conscious and free rebellion of the creature; only an equivalent homage of submission and love can effectively repair this disorder. This Christ has done in our name; and (He so repaired) in all the actions of His life, but especially in His acceptance of the sorrowful sacrifice which was imposed upon Him by the Providential course of His mission.⁸

The procedure adopted for the analytical demonstration to be presented in this chapter will be as follows: the statements and definitions of the Ecclesiastical Magisterium; the testimony of Sacred Scripture and Tradition; the analysis of the elements involved in the concept itself, namely, the Headship of Christ, and His motives of love and obedience.

2. Demonstration—doctrine of the Church and Scriptural basis.

The Redemption, although a divinely revealed dogma of faith, has not as yet been precisely and *ex professo* solemnly defined by the extraordinary magisterium of the Church. The doctrine of vicarious satisfaction as formulated by St. Thomas cannot therefore be definitively termed *de fide*. However, that it does pertain to faith, and that it is contained equivalently in the symbols and councils of the Church is evident from the following citations.⁹

The Nicene-Constantinople Creed formulated at the Council of Constantinople states:

Qui propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem descendit de coelis. . . et homo factus est. Et crucifixus est pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato, passus et sepultus est. (D.B. 86)

The Council of Ephesus gives the following in Canon 10:

(Christus) obtulit autem semetipsum pro nobis in odorem suavitatis Deo et Patri. (D.B. 122)

The fuller idea of satisfaction and its vicarious nature are likewise mentioned in the following:

The Council of Toledo—Et tamen passionem ipsam, salva divinitate sua, pro delictis nostris sustinuit. . . (D.B. 286)

The condemnation of the heresy of Abelard—Quod Christus non assumpsit carnem, ut nos a jugo diaboli liberaret. (D.B. 371)

The Council of Lyons— . . . in humanitate pro nobis et salute nostra passum vera carnis passionem. . . (D.B. 462)

The acceptance and incorporation of the scholastic terminology

⁸ Riviere, *Etude Théologique*, p. 313.

⁹ For convenience, the references to the *Enchiridion Symbolorum* of Denzinger-dion will be given under the abbreviation: D.B. (Future references to the *Enchiridion* will be given under the abbreviation: D.B.)

itself is found in the decree on justification formulated at the Council of Trent:

. . . Dominus noster Jesus Christus, qui "cum essemus inimici propter nimiam caritatem, qua dilexit nos," sua sanctissima passione in ligno crucis nobis justificationem meruit, et pro nobis Deo Patri satisfecit. (D.B. 798)

Cum enim ille ipse Christus Jesus tamquam "caput in membra" et tamquam "vitis in palmites," in ipsos justificatos jugiter virtutem influat. . . nihil justificatis amplius desesse credendum est, quinimmo plene illis quidem operibus, quae in Deo sunt facta, divinae legi pro hujus vitae statu satisfecisse. . . (D.B. 809)

Not to be omitted is the condemnation of the Socinians who denied that Jesus Christ

. . . subisse acerbissimam crucis mortem, ut nos a peccatis et ab aeterna morte redimeret et Patri ad vitam aeternam reconciliaret. (D.B. 993)

Finally, the doctrine itself had been formulated by the Vatican Council in two canons as stated below:

Si quis affirmare praesumpserit satisfactionem vicariam, unius scilicet mediatoris pro cunctis hominibus, justitiae divinae repugnare, A.S. Si quis non confiteatur ipsum Deum Verbum, in assumpta carne patiendo et moriendo, pro peccatis nostris Deo potuisse satisfacere, vel vere et proprie satisfecisse, A.S. 10

Unfortunately, however, these two canons were not formally promulgated, but they are, nevertheless, valuable indications of the mind of the Church, and whatever be their official value, they provide at least a more precise formulation of the concept of vicarious satisfaction which has already been equivalently expressed and taught by the ordinary magisterium of the church.¹¹

Theology, or rather the Catholic faith, teaches that Jesus Christ offers to God, in our place, a true satisfaction for our sins. . . If there is not as yet a formal and explicit definition, the dogma is equivalently affirmed in the symbols of faith and the allusions found in the Councils.¹²

Given the authority enjoyed by the ordinary magisterium of the Church, coupled with the testimony of Sacred Scripture and Tradition,

¹⁰ Cf. Riviere, *Etude Théologique*, p. 120.

¹¹ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 116-123.

¹² . . . l'Eglise n'a formulé aucune définition proprement dogmatique; mais dans son langage elle a reçu d'abord les expressions scripturaires de rançon et de sacrifice, plus tard le terme scolastique de satisfaction. . . *Ibid.*, p. 121.

Note: The citations quoted from the Councils of the Church, while sufficient for the purpose at hand, are by no means exhaustive. Additional references to the *Enchiridion Symbolorum* given by Garrigou-Lagrange are: D.B. 319, 323, 429, 552, 711, 720, 796, 820, 1019, 1096, 1294, 1409. Cf. Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, pp. 392-393, 416-417.

¹² "La théologie ou plutôt, la foi catholique, enseigne que Jésus-Christ a offert à Dieu, à notre place, une véritable satisfaction pour tous nos péchés. . . 'S'il n'y a pas à ce sujet de définition explicite et formelle, le dogme est équivalentement affirmé dans les symboles de foi et les allusions des conciles.'" Hugon, *Le Mystère de la Rédemption*, pp. 61-62.

tion to be given presently, the concept of vicarious satisfaction is to be considered *proxima fidei*.

Christus proprie et vere satisfecit pro nobis apud Deum.—Hæc conclusio ad fidem pertinet.¹³

The term *satisfaction* does not appear in the Sacred Scriptures, nevertheless vicarious satisfaction as proposed by St. Thomas is vide many and precise references therein, for the Scriptures provide as the payment of a price, given freely by Him for the liberation and redemption of all mankind, and as an act of love whereby Christ compensated for the sins of the world. Of the various ways in which the numerous texts of Sacred Scripture may be presented, the procedure to be followed here will include a selection of texts from the Gospels and Epistles, together with a brief commentary on their application to the theological concept itself.

The progressive revelation given by Christ of His own Passion and Death as recorded by the Synoptics may be summarized briefly in this manner: Christ came to save men, and frequently testified in His future death as the fulfillment of the prophecies, and as the means of man's liberation from sin.

"The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost." (*Luke* 19:10)
From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and Scribes and chief priests, and be put to death, and on the third day rise again. (*Mat.* 16:21)

"For the Son of Man also has not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many." (*Mark* 10:45)

"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the Scribes; and they will condemn him to death, and on the third day he will rise again." (*Mat.* 20:18-19)

"All of you drink this; for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is being shed for many unto the forgiveness of sins." (*Mat.* 26:28)

That the propitiatory sacrifice (reparatory compensation) whereby the Saviour purified men in His blood, was given by Christ out of love and obedience is particularly evident in the Gospel of St. John:

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love than this no one has, that one lay down his life for his friends." (*John* 15:12-14)

¹³ Lottini, *Institutiones Theologiæ Dogmaticæ*, II, p. 258.
As expressed by Rivière: "Dans l'Eglise catholique, à défaut du magistère ordinaire qui n'a pas été jusqu'à présent saisi de la question, le magistère pp. 121-122.
"Etude Théologique, le magistère vicariaire."

"I am the good shepherd . . . and I lay down my life for my sheep. . . . For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have the power to lay it down, and I have the power to take it up again. Such is the command I have received from my Father." (*John* 10:14-18)

"I will no longer speak much with you, for the prince of the world is coming, and in me he has nothing. But he comes that the world may know that I love the Father, and that I do as the Father has commanded me." (*John* 14:30-31)

The testimony of the Synoptics therefore gives sufficiently clear proof that, as Christ Himself foretold, the price of man's salvation was paid in the Saviour's own blood "shed for many unto the forgiveness of sins." But He who gives the price or His life "as a ransom for many," by that very fact truly satisfies for those whom the price liberates.¹⁴

The further development and analysis of the doctrine of the Redemption is to be found principally in the Epistles of St. Paul who is looked upon as the first theologian. Since a complete and detailed exegetical presentation of the Pauline doctrine of Redemption belongs properly to the province of positive theology, the following selected texts and commentary, although limited, will nevertheless provide whatever evidence may be required for a valid Scriptural demonstration of the concept of vicarious satisfaction.

Dominant among the ideas expressed in the Pauline Epistles concerning the Redemption is that of the reconciliation of humanity with God effected through the Cross of Jesus Christ. While St. Paul does not, of course, present a theory properly so-called, he has in his writings, in place of scientific formulae, those principal ideas and forms of the doctrine which provide the basis for the development of the scholastic concept of Redemption: Christ, the new Adam, is the cause of man's liberation from sin, the means whereby the sinner is again reconciled to God, the expiatory Victim in the shedding of His blood as the price of the redemption of all mankind.

. . . as Christ also loved us and delivered Himself up for us an offering and a sacrifice to God to ascend in fragrant odor. (*Ephes.* 5:2)

Again, he is the head of his body, the Church. . . . For it has pleased God the Father that in him all his fullness should dwell, and that through him he should reconcile to himself all things, whether on the earth or in the heavens, making peace through the blood of his cross. (*Coloss.* 1:18-20)¹⁵

¹⁴ Pins X has condemned the following proposition of the Modernists: *Doctrina de morte piaculari Christi non est evangelica, sed tantum paulina.*" D.B., 2038.

¹⁵ Likewise in the *First Epistle of St. Peter*: ". . . who himself bore our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died to sin, might live to justice." (*2:24*);

"You however, are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people. . . ." (*2:29*);
"You know that you were redeemed . . . not with perishable things, with silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. . . ." (*1:18-19*).

For you have been bought at a great price. (1 Cor. 6:20)

Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. . . . (1 Cor. 15:3)

The punishment due to the sins of men was suffered voluntarily by Christ as an adequate and indeed superabundant reparation to God, out of love and obedience.

... (Christ Jesus) who though he was by nature God, did not consider being equal to God a thing to be clung to, but emptied Himself, taking the nature humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even to death on a cross. (Philipp. 2:6-9)

But where the offense has abounded, grace has abounded yet more. (Rom. 5:20)

... who gave Himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from the wickedness of this present world according to the will of our God and Father. (Gal. 1:4)

... as Christ also loved the church and delivered himself up for her. . . . (Ephes. 5:25-26)

But God, who is rich in mercy, by reason of his very great love, wherewith he has loved us even when we were dead by reason of our sins, brought us to life together with Christ. . . . (Ephes. 2:4-6)

The blood of Christ is offered to God on behalf of all men as the price of their ransom and as the means of propitiation for the offense of sin; Christ was ordained by God the Representative of all humanity, and as a consequence all men are contained in Him and share intimately in His actions. In His impressive Epistle to the Romans, pregnant with the first theological concepts and reasoning relative to the great truth of the Redemption, St. Paul gives an inspired expression to the vicarious mode of the salvation wrought through the Cross of the Saviour. Christ, being without sin Himself, substitutes Himself for all mankind, and is Himself made sin for them in order that they, dying with Him and in Him, may receive in Him the justice of God. In other words, even as the sin of Adam made men sinners, so does the obedience of Christ make them justified—for He took upon Himself the debt of their sins, and made satisfaction for them to God. According to Rivière:

According to the basic tenet of the Christian faith, he does not rest satisfied with establishing a relationship between our salvation and the Cross: he strives to explain its supernatural efficacy and to this end he introduces in turn the notions of ransom, of sacrifice, of reconciliation, of vicarious satisfaction.¹⁶

In the *First Epistle of St. John*: "And he is a propitiation for our sins, not for ours only but also for those of the whole world." (2:2)

"In this is the love, not that we have loved God, but that He has first loved us, and sent His Son a propitiation for our sins." (2:2)

16 "Il ne se contente pas, suivant la donnée fondamentale de la foi chrétienne, de rattacher notre salut à la croix: il s'efforce d'en expliquer la surnaturelle efficacité et pour cela il introduit successivement les idées de rançon, de sacrifice, de réconciliation, d'expiation substitutive." Rivière, *Étude Historique*, p. 54.

They are justified freely by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth as a propitiation by his blood through faith, to manifest his justice, God in his patience remitting former sins. . . . (Rom. 3:24-26)¹⁷

For we know that our old self has been crucified with him, in order that the body of sin may be destroyed, that we may no longer be slaves to sin. (Rom. 6:6-7)

Therefore as through one man sin entered into the world and through sin death . . . yet death reigned from Adam until Moses even over those who did not sin after the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a figure of him who was to come. But not like the offense is the gift. . . . Therefore as from the offense of the one man the result was unto condemnation to all men, so from the justice of the one the result is unto justification of life to all men. For just as by the disobedience of the one man the many were constituted sinners, so also by the obedience of the one the many will be constituted just. (Rom. 5:12-20)¹⁸

In the latter passage St. Paul institutes a striking parallel between Christ and Adam, each of whom were established by God as the head of humanity; whereas men were born in the first man whose sin resulted in death for all, so too were men contained in Christ whose justice returned them to life.

According to Prat, the basis of the parallel and contrast between Adam and Christ "is to be sought, on the one hand, in the representative character common to both, and, on the other, in the fact that Christ represents humanity better and more efficaciously than Adam."¹⁹

Finally, it is to be noted that St. Paul, while ever the ardent preacher of Christ crucified, also places a particular emphasis upon the obedience out of which Christ suffered His death by crucifixion in reparation for the disobedience of men. In the words of Rivière, and which will also serve as a fitting conclusion:

For, if Jesus Christ, by a voluntary substitution, put Himself in the place of the guilty, He did so not merely to pay the penalty for us, but above all,

17 In the Old Testament, the word *redemption* (ἀγοράω) signifies the theocratic deliverance promised to the faithful by Jehovah; in the New Testament it is the Messianic deliverance obtained by the blood of Christ offered as a ransom. Although *redemption* may signify simply deliverance, its etymological value indicates the deliverance of men obtained either by paying the ransom (ἀγοράω) or the price due (τιμή) which is given in the blood of Christ. Cf. Prat, *Theology of St. Paul*, I, p. 432.

18 Parallel passages from St. Paul's other Epistles:
 "For our sakes He made him to be sin who knew nothing of sin, so that in him we might become the justice of God." (2 Cor. 5:21)
 "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, becoming a curse for us. . . ." (Gal. 3:13)
 "And all things he made subject under his feet, and him he gave as head over all the church, which indeed is his body. . . ." (Ephes. 1:22-23).
 19 Prat, *op. cit.*, I, p. 439.

to make reparation for our rebellion by His own submission, thus reestablishing in order, in God's sight, the human race of which He is the Head. It remains forever a mystery, but a mystery in which the Apostle leaves us to find love and to discover wisdom.²⁰

The arguments from Tradition.

An historical or critical analysis of the Redemption as found in the Fathers is again the proper province of positive theology. Over and above the history of the dogma, an evaluation of the Patristic theology of the Redemption is in itself a vast and complicated task. The difficulties inherent in any historical treatise are augmented considerably here by reason of the rhetorical and sometimes dramatic language and metaphorical terms of expression employed by the Fathers. Further, while they are unanimous in their writings concerning the existence and effects of the Redemption, differences concerning the veil, but usually by way of emphasis, particularly concerning the sanctifying power of the Redemption in its relation to the Incarnation. A similar difficulty lies in the fact that in the works of the early Fathers the dominant idea seemed to be that of supplying an answer to the question: "Why had a God become man?" Thus it was that some writers, Origen for example, endeavored to make the mystery of the Incarnation more intelligible by proving the expediency of the Redemption without perhaps delving too deeply into the profound meaning of the Redemption itself.²¹

It will be of advantage, therefore, both by way of maintaining a unified procedure and of securing greater clarity, to incorporate here a brief summary of the various so-called Patristic theories of Redemption and their relation to the concept of St. Thomas. The classification usually adopted by historians and theologians, and as given by Riviere, may be stated briefly as follows:

1. *The Mystical or Physical Theory*: The redemption of man is effected through the sanctification of human nature. The liberation of man is effected and attributed primarily to the Person of the Incarnate Word, insofar as human nature, once stained by sin, was sanctified by its intimate contact with the Word, the source of sanctity. The Incarnation then becomes not only the cause, but the Type and actual realization of man's salvation.

²⁰ "Car, si Jésus-Christ s'est mis par une substitution volontaire à la place des coupables, ce n'est pas seulement pour acquitter notre peine, c'est surtout pour réparer notre rébellion par son obéissance, rétablissant ainsi dans l'ordre, aux yeux de Dieu, l'humanité dont il est le chef. C'est toujours le mystère, mais l'Apôtre nous fait trouver l'amour et déviner la sagesse." Riviere, *Étude Historique*, p. 54.

For additional Scriptural references cf. Tanqueray, *op. cit.*, pp. 733-737; Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, pp. 416, 395-398; Hugon, *Le Mystère de la Rédemption*, pp. 63-69; Riviere, *Étude Théologique*, pp. 46-71, and *Étude Historique*, pp. 29-100.

²¹ Cf. Prat, *op. cit.*, II, p. 200.

Proponents of this theory are to be found particularly among the Greek Fathers.²²

The relation of the Incarnation to the Redemption as expressed by St. Thomas has already been given in the preceding chapter. According to the Angelic Doctor, the Incarnation is admittedly necessary for a condign satisfaction; the infinite value of the work of the Redemption proceeds most certainly from the hypostatic union; and finally, given the preordination of the Divine Will, man's salvation could be wrought only through the Passion and Death of Christ.

2. *The Theory of the Rights of the Devil*: According to Riviere, this theory was conceived by the Fathers in one of three forms:

a.) Juridical Form (theory of ransom)—whereby it is asserted or insinuated by some of the Fathers that the devil had direct claim over men as a result of sin, that compensation was due him, and that Christ in His blood paid a ransom to him for the liberation of his captives.

b.) Political Form (theory of the abuse of power)—whereby the devil is considered as one who has received from God the power to put men to death on account of their sins. In attacking the innocent Christ, however, the devil overstepped his constitutional rights, and in consequence it was perfectly just that God, for this abuse of power, should deprive him of his captives. The devil no longer receives a ransom, but the just punishment of his crime.

c.) Poetical Form (rhetorical discourses and metaphorical expressions)—as the title well indicates, this form of the "devil's rights theory" would include those writings of the Fathers that were intended not as dogmatic expressions, but primarily as vivid pictorializations and dramatic interpretations of the victorious conquest of Christ over sin and the devil.²³

Whatever the form of the *Devil's Rights Theory* as found expressed among the Fathers, the position of St. Thomas indicates clearly that, while sin may be considered a captivity, man does not become the property of his captor, for the evident reason that Satan can never become the master of humanity. Consequently, in the redemption or redemption effected by Christ, there was no actual payment or price offered to the prince of sin. Man, despite his offense against God, had never ceased to be under the dominion of God, his Creator, nor was he handed over to Satan as to a lawful owner, but rather as to an executor of divine justice. The price Christ paid was given evidently to Him who had been offended, not to the devil under whose captivity man had fallen.

Legitur, quia passio Christi fuit sufficiens et superabundans satisfactio pro peccato et reatu generis humani, eius passio fuit quasi quoddam pretium. Per peccatum et reatu sumus ab utraque obligatione. . . . Christus autem satisfecit, non quidem pecuniam dando aut aliquid inujusmodi, sed dando id quod fuit maximum, seipsum, pro nobis. Et ideo passio Christi dicitur esse nostra redemptio.²⁴

²² Cf. Riviere, *Étude Historique*, p. 117ff.

²³ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 373-445. Cf. also Prat, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 442-447.

²⁴ *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 4.

Dicendum quod, quia redemptio requirebatur ad hominis liberationem per respectum ad Deum, non autem per respectum ad diabolum; non erat pretium solvendum diabolo, sed Deo. Et ideo Christus sanguinem suum, qui est pretium nostrae redemptionis, non dicitur obtulisse diabolo, sed Deo.²⁵

Exclusive of the theories themselves and whatever the difficulties involved, of singular and immediate importance here is the demonstration of the Patristic foundation for the theological concept of vicarious satisfaction as embodied in the works of St. Thomas. However, given the relatively late origin of the scholastic concept and its terminology, the primary purpose to be achieved, as in Sacred Scripture, will be not to furnish evidence from the Fathers in defense of the Redemption *per modum satisfactionis* as such, but rather to demonstrate conclusively that the idea or *rem ipsam* is contained in the very least, equivalently, in the writings of the Fathers. The citations given below, while not by any means exhaustive, will nevertheless provide sufficient evidence for the Patristic basis and validity of the Thomistic concept of vicarious satisfaction.²⁶

Among the Apostolic Fathers, St. Clement of Rome refers explicitly to the motive of love out of which Christ suffered and died in accordance with the divine will. He gave on behalf of the human race His own blood, flesh and soul:

In caritate nos Dominus sibi assumpsit; propter caritatem quam erga nos habuit, Dominus noster Jesus Christus voluntate divina sanguinem suum pro nobis tradidit, et carnem pro carne nostra et animam pro animabus nostris. (Journal, 26)

That Christ died on behalf of mankind, i.e., in a vicarious manner, is referred to by St. Ignatius of Antioch and St. Polycarp as follows:

St. Ignatius: Cum enim episcopo subjecti sitis ut Jesu Christo videmini mihi non secundum hominem, sed secundum Jesum Christum vivere, qui propter nos mortuus est, ut credentes in mortem ipsius mortem eflugiat. (Ibid., 48)

St. Polycarp: . . . Jesus Christus, "qui peccata nostra in corpore nostro super lignum pertulit", . . . propter nos, ut in ipso vivamus, omnia sustinuit. (Ibid., 75)

St. Irenaeus refers to the parallel between Adam and Christ, indicating the motive of obedience in the death suffered by the Saviour:

(Deum) in primo quidem Adam offendimus, non facientes ejus praeceptum; in secundo autem Adam reconciliati sumus, obediētes usque ad mortem facti. (Ibid., 255)

²⁵ Ibid., ad 3um.

²⁶ The citations are taken from Journal, *Enchiridion Patristicum*; cf. *ibid.*, Index Theologicus, n. 416-421.

For additional references cf. Riviere, *Etude Historique*, "La Redemption chez les Peres Grecs," pp. 101-211, "Chez les Peres Latins," pp. 211-279; also Modern Eras, c. 1915-1921 (doctrine of the Church from Patristic to Cf. also Galter, *De Incarnatione ac Redemptione*, pp. 374-381; Tanqueray, *op. cit.*, pp. 738-746; Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, pp. 398ff., 416.

In the following citation from Origen, reference is made to the innocence of Christ even though He "bore" (i.e., in place of, or on behalf of) the sins of mankind:

Pro populo autem moritur hic homo omnibus animantibus purior, qui peccata nostra tulit et infirmitates, utpote potens universum totius mundi peccatum in se receptum solvere et consumere et delere, quoniam "peccatum non fecit neque inventus est in ore ejus dolus," neque agnovit peccatum. (Ibid., 482)

St. Cyprian employs the term *portavit* which is also used by St. Thomas in reference to the satisfaction given by one on behalf of another:

. . . peccata nostra portavit, qui pro nobis doluit, quem Deus tradidit pro peccatis nostris. (Ibid., 552; cf. also 563)

Eusebius also refers to the vicarious aspect of Christ's death as the great sacrifice offered to God on behalf of all humanity:

. . . ut nostras abstergeret maculas peccatorum, qui pro nobis sacrificatus et exsecratio factus sit . . . ut tanquam Dei victimam atque ingens sacrificium ipsi supremo Deo offerretur pro universo mundo. (Ibid., 669)

St. Athanasius refers explicitly to the death of Christ as the payment of the debt of mankind: Christ has given Himself as a Victim for others:

Hinc corpus quod sibi ipse accepit velut hostiam et victimam omni puram macula morti offerendo, mortem statim ab omnibus similibus, suo pro aliis oblato, propulsavit . . . id quod debebatur in morte solvit. . . . (Ibid., 751)

The element of voluntariness in the suffering and death of Christ, necessary for the attainment of a true reparation, is given particular emphasis by both St. Hilary and St. Ambrose:

St. Hilary: Passus ergo est Deus, quia se subiecit voluntarius passioni . . . hostiam se ipse Deo Patri voluntarie offerendo. . . . (Ibid., 889)

St. Ambrose: Potuit enim Christus non mori, si voluisset; sed neque refugendam mortem quasi ignavam putavit, neque melius nos quam moriendo servasset. Itaque mors ejus vita est omnium. (Ibid., 1275)

St. Gregory of Nyssa speaks of the reconciliation of the world through Christ who redeemed mankind in his own blood:

. . . nam in illo, qui pro nobis mortuus est et resurrexit, mundum sibi ipsi reconciliavit unigenitus Deus, nos omnes . . . tanquam captivos quosdam redimens per suum sanguinem, qui ejusdem naturae est ac noster. (Ibid., 1052)

Saint Augustine gives vivid expression to the innocence of Christ shedding His blood, to the absolute voluntariness of His sufferings and death, to the complete atonement for the sins of mankind, to His obedience in accepting the mandate of the Father.

Sic quippe in remissionem peccatorum nostrorum innocens sanguis ille effusus est . . . sed si noluisse, etiam hoc non pati potuisset, quia et Deus erat. . . . In

haec redemptione tamquam pretium pro nobis datus est sanguis Christi. (*Ibid.*, 1675)

Morte sua quippe uno verissimo sacrificio pro nobis oblato, quidquid culparum erat unde nos principatus et potestates ad luenda supplicia jure detinebant, purgavit, abolevit, exstinxit. (*Ibid.*, 1655)

Habebat ut moretetur mandatam Patris, tamquam ille de quo praedictum erit: 'Quae non rapui, tunc exsolvebam,' mortuus sine debito solutus, et nos a 1859²⁷

1859²⁷ Rapuerat autem Adae peccatum. . . . (M.P.L., 35, 1838.

Finally, reference is again made by St. Gregory the Great to Christ, the Victim, who, without sin, gives Himself for sinners:

Fecit pro nobis sacrificium, corpus suum exhibuit pro peccatoribus victimam sine peccato, quae et humanitate mori et justitia mundare potuisset. (*Journal*, 231)²⁸

The doctrine contained in the foregoing excerpts provides ample evidence for the fact that, whatever may have been the mode of expression or emphasis prevalent in the writings of the Fathers, the basic elements essential to the concept of vicarious satisfaction are indeed present and to some extent accurately analyzed. Considering the various texts as a unit, it would not be an overstatement to conclude that, according to the theological interpretation of the Fathers, Christ the Head of mankind, took the burden of the sins of the human race upon Himself, suffered and died upon the Cross willingly out of love and obedience, offering Himself as the reparatory Victim.

Satisfactio enim, sensu suo obvio et generali, consistit in hoc quod pro aliquo debito vel damno aliquid offertur, ex cuius acceptance creditor vel damnificatus dicitur moriendo debitum nostrum solvisse eoque sensu pro nobis Deo satisfacisse.²⁹

Finally, in regard to the great principle of solidarity, the *sine qua non* of the vicarious nature of Christ's satisfaction, Prat states:

This illuminating principle was not only perceived but clearly formulated by the Fathers of the Church. All of them say in about the same words that Jesus Christ had to become what we are, in order to make us become what he is. . . . That Christ, as Redeemer, comprises and summarizes all humanity.³⁰

With the advent of the scholastic centuries, not only were the occasionally exaggerated notions of the Fathers refuted, but in a

²⁷ It should be noted here that the same Scriptural text is quoted by St. Thomas as follows:

"Sed contra est quod ex persona ejus dicitur in Psalmo (68:5): 'Quae non rapui, tunc exsolvebam.' Non autem exsolvit qui perfecte non satisfacit. Ergo videtur quod Christus patiendo satisfacere perfecte pro peccatis nostris." *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 2.

²⁸ For additional texts and commentaries, cf Hugon, *Le Mystère de la Rédemption*, pp. 17-18, 69-73.

²⁹ Galitier, *op. cit.*, pp. 381-382.

³⁰ Prat, *op. cit.*, II, p. 201.

positive manner, their traditional formulas, whether expressed in theological or dramatic terms, were corrected and synthesized into the present theory of vicarious satisfaction as demonstrated by St. Thomas.

The formulation of a unified doctrinal synthesis from the materials provided by the Fathers was first realized in the *Cur Deus Homo* of St. Anselm. Apart from the use of the term by Raoul Ardent,³¹ to St. Anselm must be given the honor of being the first to adopt the term *satisfactio* as a proper theological expression of the work of the Redemption wrought by Christ.³² In so doing, he further proved that the idea of satisfaction, far from being something new, was but the expression, both valid and scientific, of very old notions.

In conclusion, while the controlling purpose of this treatise does not warrant the presentation of a comparative analysis of the doctrine of St. Anselm and that of St. Thomas, a brief summary of the *Cur Deus Homo* and the amendments given it by the Angelic Doctor is considered necessary as a means of further clarifying his personal formulation of the theological concept of vicarious satisfaction.

According to St. Anselm, God was made man in order to satisfy for sins. All rational creatures are subject to God's will; if they do not render Him the honor due, they thereby take honor from Him and contract a debt towards divine justice. This debt can be compensated only by satisfaction which returns at least as much honor as was taken away.

Satisfaction or punishment must follow sin, and according to the measure of sin. Man, however, cannot return an adequate satisfaction because any penitential acts he may elicit are already due to God, and secondly, because the offense given God is infinite. Satisfaction, therefore, apart from the God-Man, is impossible.

St. Anselm states further that Christ redeemed men by His death upon the Cross. Christ could not, however, satisfy by acts of love and obedience which He performed throughout His whole life, for the reason that both obedience and love were due to God as acts of creatures. But by His death which He was not compelled to suffer because of His innocence, He satisfied abundantly, since it was an offering of Himself at once voluntary and of infinite value.

Finally, this act was meritorious. Since Christ from the beginning had received all things from the Father, He could not merit for Himself, and consequently He merited for us as His brothers.³³

³¹ Cf. Riviere, *Etude Historique*, p. 289.

³² Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 291; also Hugon, *De Verbo Incarnato*, p. 671.

³³ Cf. Tanquorey, *op. cit.*, p. 744.

The integral text of the *Cur Deus Homo* is in Migne, P. L., CLVIII, c. 361-430. Cf. also Baiuvel, *D.I.C.*, "Anselme," c. 1358-1359; Riviere, *D.T.C.*, "Redemption," c. 1942-1944, and *Etude Historique*, pp. 291-323.

St. Anselm defines satisfaction: "Nec sufficit solummodo reddere quod ablatum

The principal amendments to the Anselmian doctrine made by St. Thomas are: 1.) In place of the absolute necessity of the Redemption only for its extreme fitness, St. Thomas presents the arguments he likewise allows for divine condonation of sin apart from satisfaction as well as the acceptance of an imperfect satisfaction.³⁴ 2.) Instead of having the redemptive work appear as a solitary act, St. Thomas places great emphasis upon the fact that, by virtue of Christ being the divinely-appointed Head of the human race, all mankind is associated in both His actions and in the value of those actions through the medium of a supernatural solidarity.³⁵

Analysis—The Headship of Christ and solidarity.

The two arguments embodied in the Thomistic concept of vicarious satisfaction, as presented in the Status Quaestionis, are as follows: 1.) Christ, as Head of the entire human race, voluntarily took upon Himself the obligation of satisfying for the sins of that race, that is, His syllogistic form thus:

Christ as the Head, and all mankind as the members, constitute one person.

But the actions of the person are predicated of the Head as its source and in which it participates.

Therefore the human race shares or participates in the satisfactory actions of Christ.

2.) Christ satisfied by showing or giving to the Father what was in itself of such great goodness, dignity, and excellence that it not only equaled but surpassed the offense given by sin, namely, His suffering death out of love and obedience. The syllogistic form for this argument of St. Thomas may be phrased:

True satisfaction obtains when there is given to the one offended a reparation equal to the offense.

But what Christ gave is equal and greater than what the compensation of humanity's offense required.

Therefore Christ satisfied and superabundantly.³⁶

The theological demonstration of these two arguments will be given

est, sed pro contumelia illata plus debet reddere quam abstulit. . . . Sic ergo debet omnis qui peccat honorem quem rapuit Deo solvere; et haec est satisfactio."
P. L., CLVIII, c. 376-377.

³⁴Cf. preceding chapter.

³⁵Cf. Riviere, *Étude Théologique*, p. 103.

Not to be omitted are the further development and clarification given the doctrine of St. Anselm by Hugo a S. Victoire, Peter Lombard, Alexander of Hales, and St. Bonaventure. For a detailed analysis cf. Riviere, *Étude Historique*, pp. 279-373, and *D.I.C.*, "Redemption," c. 1942-1947.

³⁶Cf. Hugon, *De Verbo Incarnato*, p. 671.

analytically. The analysis of the element of vicariousness in the Thomistic concept will include a definition of the term itself, the consideration of the possibility of a vicarious satisfaction, the analysis of the principle of solidarity upon which the vicarious satisfaction of Christ is based. The analysis of the elements of love and obedience will include the reasons given by St. Thomas demonstrating the fact that the greatness of the love of Christ and His voluntary obedience which proceeded from it, were such that God loved this more than He detested the offense, and as a result of which Christ procured an adequate satisfaction.

The term *vicarious*, the adjectival form of the noun *vicar*, is derived etymologically from the Latin *vicis* meaning a *change or interchange*; when the Latin term is used in an adverbial sense, it signifies *in place of*. The term *vicar*, consequently, refers to the person who has lawfully and willingly interchanged places with another, or assumed the office or functions of another, and hence is considered a *substitute* or *vicegerent*. When the vicar or representative performs an action in this official capacity, he is said to act not personally, but on behalf of the person or persons whom he represents; the results of his actions are likewise such that they will accrue to the benefit or advantage of the person or group so represented. The action thereby performed by the official representative is said to be a vicarious action, or one performed on behalf of another.

Given this definition, the question will then follow: Is it possible for one to so satisfy for another? In other words, is it possible for a duly appointed representative to accept or undergo the punishment attached to an offense in order to make reparation for it, particularly in view of the fact that he himself has not committed the offense? The argument given by St. Thomas in demonstrating the possibility of a vicarious satisfaction, for which the Ecclesiastical, Scriptural, and Patristic basis has already been stated, rests firmly upon the real meaning of satisfaction and the essential elements involved.

According to the Angelic Doctor, the reparatory (and hence satisfactory) value of any punishment proceeds primarily from the intention to suffer the penalty willingly, to sustain the punishment from the motive of charity; in a word, to have the act adequately repair the offense inflicted. When, however, this same reparatory action is performed by one other than the actual offender, the elements of voluntariness and charity essential to true satisfaction remain unchanged. Indeed, the motive of charity involved is greatly intensified insofar as the representative, or person satisfying vicariously, is entirely innocent of the crime itself.

The nature of satisfaction therefore is such that nothing would prevent another from voluntarily offering to perform any act or undergo any punishment that may be deemed necessary in order to repair an offense committed by one other than himself. Given the union and

sameness of will and heart (intention) between the actual offender and the person who will satisfy in his stead, and the acceptance of the latter by the one offended, vicarious satisfaction is not only possible, but valid.³⁷ As expressed by St. Thomas:

Quantum ad solutionem debiti, unus potest pro alio satisfacere: dummodo sit in caritate, ut opera ejus satisfactoria esse possint. Nec oportet quod maior poena imponatur ei qui pro altero satisfacit quam principali imponentur: ut quidam dicunt, hac ratione moti, quia poena propria magis satisfacit quam aliena. Quia poena habet vim satisfaciendi maxime ratione caritatis, qua homo ipsam sustinet. Ipse satisfaceret, ideo minor poena requiritur in eo qui pro alio satisfacit quam si principali requiretetur. Unde dicitur in "Vitis Patrum", quod propter caritatem unus qui, alterius fratris caritate ductus, poenitentiam fecit pro peccato quod non commiserat, alteri peccatum quod commiserat, dimissum est.³⁸

It must be understood, however, that the person who satisfies in a vicarious manner is not thereby being *punished*, if and when the term *punishment* is meant to signify that evil inflicted upon one for an offense committed. The evident reason for this lies in the fact that only the person guilty of the offense can justly receive and sustain the punishment due as such. The Thomistic interpretation of satisfaction, however, as already indicated, relegates the material or penal element involved to a position of secondary importance, while the intention of the offender to suffer the punishment precisely as a moral reparation remains the real *sine qua non* of a true satisfaction. That such be the intention and will of the person satisfying vicariously is sufficient in order to procure satisfaction, or reparation for the offense. In other words, if the voluntary suffering of a penalty on behalf of another is prompted by the formal intention of obtaining the release of the person or persons so represented from the offense he or they themselves are guilty of, true satisfaction is thereby procured. Consequently, if and when a penalty or punishment is thereby procured the personal offender, exclusively as a penal expiation, is sustained by the person so punished is to be considered. In satisfaction, however, when someone, in order to placate him whom the injury has offended, voluntarily assumes the punishment, that is, takes it upon himself on behalf of the offender, it is that person's charity and benevolence that is to be considered. Finally, and of similar impor-

³⁷ As stated by Faquet, the conditions required whereby one can satisfy for another are: the existence of a debt, a work of itself capable of satisfying, and the acceptance of that substitution on the part of the one offended. Cf. Faquet, *De Incarnatione*, p. 448.

³⁸ *Summa*, III Suppl., q. 13, a. 2. Cf. also *ibid.*, III, q. 48, a. 2, ad luum. In reply to the objection that satisfaction should be performed by the person guilty of the offense even as he is held to personal confession and contrition, St. Thomas replies: "Non autem est similis ratio de confessione et contritione, St. Thomas computantur etiam exteriori, ad quem assumi possunt instrumenta: quia satisfactio consistit in actu exteriori, ad quem assumi possunt instrumenta; inter quae computantur etiam amici." *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 2, ad luum. Cf. final section of this chapter for the discussion of objections.

tance, is the fact that satisfaction is concerned primarily with the person offended, and with the end in view of giving him an adequate reparation, whether it be provided by the personal offender (and this is to be preferred when possible) or in a vicarious manner.

Et quamvis in puniendo peccata oporteat illum puniri qui peccavit . . . tamen in satisfaciendo unus potest alterius poenam ferre. Quia dum poena pro peccato infligitur, pensatur ejus qui punitur iniquitas: in satisfactione vero, dum quis, ad placandum eum quem offendit, voluntarie poenam assumit, satisfaciens caritas et benevolentia aestimatur, quae maxime apparet cum quis pro alio poenam assumit. Et ideo Deus satisfactionem unius pro alio acceptat. . . .³⁹

The Angelic Doctor further demonstrates the possibility of a vicarious satisfaction by emphasizing the union effected between persons by the bond of charity, so that what is done through a friend, is done through one's self:

Quod vero per amicos facium, per nos ipsos facere videmur, quia amicitia ex duobus facit unum per affectum, et praecipue dilectio caritatis; et ideo sicut per seipsum, ita et per alium potest aliquis satisfacere Deo, praecipue cum necessitas fuerit: nam et poenam quam amicus propter ipsum patitur reputat aliquis ac si ipse pateretur. . . . Et iterum affectio caritatis in eo pro amico patitur facit magis satisfactionem Deo acceptam quam si pro se pateretur. . . .⁴⁰

It is evident therefore that, while the ordinary manner of making satisfaction is for the person who committed the offense to take upon himself the penalty thereby incurred, there still remains the possibility of a vicarious mode of satisfaction; and this will obtain when one who is himself innocent of the offense, and who is accepted by the person offended, freely undertakes the obligation to repair the injury in place of, or in behalf of the actual offender. Such was the satisfaction given to God by Christ on behalf of all mankind.⁴¹

Christ the Redeemer, from the motives of love and obedience, offered His own life in a vicarious satisfaction for the sins of all men. Wholly innocent of the offense given God by sin, He voluntarily suffered the punishment due, but as one who did not merit it; He paid the debt as one who had not contracted it; He compensated for an offense as one who had not inflicted it.⁴² In the words of the Angelic Doctor:

Contingit autem unum pro alio satisfacere . . . ita tamen quod poenam pro peccato alteri debitam ipse, sibi non debitam, voluntarie assumat. Poena autem consequens humani generis peccatum est mors et aliae passibilitates vitae praesentis . . . unde Apostolus dicit ad Rom. (c. 5:12): "Per unum hominem peccatum in hunc mundum intravit, et per peccatum mors."⁴³

³⁹ *Cont. Gent.*, IV, c. 55, ad 20.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, III, c. 158, ad 4.

⁴¹ Galtier defines vicarious satisfaction as the "Voluntaria permissio alicuius mali, ex intentione impetrandi alteri alicuius debiti condonationem." *De Incarnatione ac Redemptione*, p. 387.

⁴² Cf. *ibid.*, p. 387.

⁴³ *Cont. Gent.*, IV, c. 55, ad 11.

... oportuit Christum mortem pati, non solum ut exemplum praeriberet mortem contentendi propter veritatis amorem, sed ut etiam aliorum peccata purgaret. Quod quidem factum est dum ipse, qui absque peccato erat, mortem peccato debitam pati voluit, ut in se poenam alius debitam, pro aliis satisfaciendo, susceperet.⁴⁴

The essential elements involved in the notion of the vicarious satisfaction of Christ are accurately expressed by Hugon as follows:

Jesus Christ, remaining always innocent, always pleasing to His Father, has gratuitously paid for us the ransom due to the Divine Justice by reason of our sins, like a generous benefactor who pays for his subjects the debt which he himself has never contracted. In other words, the Redeemer has taken upon Himself the penalty of our faults, without ever having incurred, nor accepted upon Himself the stain of sin, and he has offered a reparation that is equal and even superior to the offense given God by all the crimes of the human race.⁴⁵

The conditions mentioned above whereby the person offended must accept the voluntary substitution⁴⁶ of the one who so desires to make reparation for the offense of another, and the moral union or oneness in charity that must exist between them, and the moral union or oneness in the satisfaction made by Christ. That Christ, the Son of God, official Representative or Vicar in providing the satisfaction due God, was a unique substitution made possible by the very fact of the Incarnation itself. It was by divine ordination, therefore, that Jesus Christ, the God-Man, was constituted the Representative of the entire human race, and in such a manner that all the members of that race share and participate most intimately in the actions of their vicar by virtue of a mystical, but real solidarity. The vicarial character of the Saviour's satisfaction is a direct consequence of this solidarity between Christ and man which is in itself a moral but real union realized in the Incarnation. Together, Christ as Head and all mankind as members constitute one, mystical person or body.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, ad 19.

⁴⁵ "Jesus-Christ restant toujours innocent, toujours agréable à Son Père, a soldé pour nous et gratuitement la rançon due à la justice divine à cause de nos péchés, semblable à un bienfaiteur libéral, payant pour ses sujets le dette qu'il n'a jamais contractée lui-même. En d'autres termes, le Rédempteur a pris sur lui la peine de nos fautes, sans en avoir jamais encouru ni accepté la coupe ou la souillure, et il a offert une réparation égale, supérieure même, à l'offense faite à Dieu par tous les crimes du genre humain." Hugon, *Le Mystère de la Rédemption*, p. 62.

Billuart uses the phrase: "vadem (surety) et sponsorem (guarantee) nostrum." *De Incarnatione*, diss. 19, a. 4.

⁴⁶ This term *substitution* is to be interpreted and used according to the principle of solidarity which will be explained presently. Substitution without solidarity is mere exchange—the transfer of an innocent person for a guilty one. This is not vicarious satisfaction.

⁴⁷ Although the terms *solidarity* and *Mystical Body* may, in a certain sense, be used interchangeably, the chief purpose here is to define and explain the term *solidarity* only in its relation to the vicarious satisfaction of Christ. For the doctrine of the Mystical Body itself cf. *Summa*, III, q. 8, in toto, and *III Sent.*, d.

As the Head of this mystical person, Christ becomes the vital influx or principle of life that quickens its members. All mankind is incorporated into Christ and in such a way that they come under His influence, share in His life, and participate in all His actions.⁴⁸

Dicendum quod, sicut tota Ecclesia dicitur unum corpus mysticum per similitudinem ad naturale corpus hominis, quod secundum diversa membra habet diversos actus, ut Apostolus docet, Rom. 12(4-5) et 1 Cor. 12 (12ff.); ita Christus dicitur caput Ecclesiae secundum similitudinem humani capitis.⁴⁹

Unde tota Christi humanitas, secundum scilicet animam et corpus, influit in homines quantum ad animam et quantum ad corpus: sed principaliter quantum ad animam; secundario quantum ad corpus.⁵⁰

Primo enim et principaliter est caput eorum qui actu ununtur sibi per gloriam. Secundo, eorum qui actu ununtur sibi per caritatem. Tertio, eorum qui actu ununtur sibi per fidem.⁵¹

That Christ, by assuming a human nature, should become the Head and all mankind members of this mystical body was decreed by God so that Christ would be in the order of salvation what Adam was in the order of nature. This divine ordination is likewise the origin of the grace in Christ as Head. Whatever merit is acquired by Him is, therefore, by virtue of the grace of Headship, also applied to humanity.⁵² Given this divine and eternal ordination for the Headship of the Saviour, He is thereby enabled to both merit and satisfy for those who share in this body as its members and who become with Him one mystical person. It is in virtue of this solidarity, this intimate union of wills between Christ and men, that the Saviour as the one loving so wills to satisfy on behalf of those loved.

Quia contingit eos, qui differunt in reatu poenae, esse unum secundum voluntatem unionem amoris, inde est quod interdum aliquis qui non peccavit poenam voluntarius pro alio portat; sicut etiam, in rebus humanis, videmus quod aliquis in se transfert alterius debitum.⁵³

Dicendum quod, si loquamur de poena satisfactoria, quae voluntarie assumitur, contingit quod unus portet poenam alterius, in quantum sunt quoddammodo unum.⁵⁴

13, q. 2, a. 2; Prat, *op. cit.*, pp. 300-309; the Encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi*, Pius XII, 29 June, 1943.

⁴⁸ Cf. Tanquerey, *The Spiritual Life*, p. 77.

Concerning the conditions for membership of Christ's Mystical Body, cf. the Encyclical of Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis Christi*, 29 June, 1943.

⁴⁹ *Summa*, III, q. 8, a. 1.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, a. 2.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, a. 3. The doctrine of the Mystical Body is *de fide divina*: "Cum enim ille ipse Jesus tamquam caput in membra, et tamquam vitis in palmites, in ipsos justificatos jugiter virtutem influat. . . ." Council of Trent, sess. 6, chap. 16, D. B., 809.

⁵² Cf. Janssens, *De Deo-Homine*, II, p. 758.

⁵³ *Summa*, I-II, q. 87, a. 7.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, a. 8.

So close and intimate is the unity which results from this solidarity that in some mysterious manner His actions as Head of the Mystical Body become the actions of mankind as its members, His merits become their merits, His satisfaction their satisfaction.

It is logical therefore that the members (of the Mystical Body) follow the initiative of the Head, and that all men ratify, through their own personal adherence, the work of their representative.⁵³

By way of further clarification it may be stated here from a negative viewpoint that the solidarity between Christ and all mankind, while not the same physical solidarity which prevails between Adam and the human race, is not, nevertheless, a mere substitution in the accepted sense of that term; it does not mean that the human race as represented by Christ has no actual participation or share in the satisfaction made by their Vicar on their behalf—rather does it signify an integral union of interests, intentions, and actions. Further, the solidarity does not indicate that Christ, by His voluntary acceptance of the penalty due sin in order to repair, must thereby Himself involve the punishment of the innocent for the guilty.⁵⁴

Jesus Christ, as the Head of the human race, whose cause He represents and whose interests He includes, personifies sin; he is made sin for us, not in our place, but for our advantage. . . . Jesus is neither a sinner nor sin, personally, but as a member of a sinful family, with which He identifies Himself.⁵⁵

When Christ is referred to, therefore, as having died for our sins, the particle *for* signifies final cause, and the meaning intended is that Christ died in order to expiate our sins. When, on the other hand, He is said to have died for us, the particle *for* then indicates that Christ was substituted (according to the principle of solidarity) in our place, that He paid the price of redemption for us, and that He truly satisfied for us.⁵⁶

Over and above the references already given, the great principle of solidarity and its effects are referred to frequently in the works of St.

⁵³ "Il est logique, en effet, que les membres suivent l'impulsion de la tête, que chacun des hommes vienne ratifier par son adhésion personnelle l'oeuvre de son représentant," Rivière, *Étude Théologique*, p. 187.

In this same section Rivière refers to Christ as the "Chef Moral de l'humanité," *Ibid.*, p. 187.

Of interest here is the following observation of Prat: "The theory of the Mystical Body is not the product of the growth of years. . . . It would be incomprehensible if we saw in it merely an abstraction, a purely mental creation. It is a reality of the moral order indeed, but a genuine reality," *Theology of St. Paul*, I, p. 300.

⁵⁶ These erroneous notions and objections will be treated in Chapter Four.

⁵⁷ Prat, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 204-205.

⁵⁸ This delicate distinction which serves to further clarify the exact meaning of the phrases *pro nobis* and *pro peccatis* is made by Billuart, *De Incarnatione*, diss. 19, a. 4.

Thomas, and always to be found is the one, same, principal note: Christ, by divine ordination, became man that men might in Him atone for their offense against God:

Opportunè igitur ut carnem passibilem et mortalem Deus assumeret absque peccato, ut sic, patièdo et morièdo, pro nobis satisfaceret et peccatum auferret. Et hoc est quod Apostolus dicit, ad Rom. (c. 8:3) quod "Deus misit Filium suum in similitudinem carnis peccati," id est, habentem carnem similem peccatoribus, scilicet passibilem et mortalem; et subdit, "ut de peccato damnaret peccatum in carne," id est, ut per poenam quam in carne pro peccato nostro sustinuit, peccatum a nobis auferret.⁵⁹

Or again,

Effectus igitur peccati primi parentis pervenit ad unumquemque per carnis originem: effectus autem mortis Christi pertingit ad unumquemque per spiritualem regenerationem, per quam homo Christo quodammodo coniungitur et incorporatur.⁶⁰

While the Angelic Doctor's entire doctrine of the Redemption rests upon the meritorious value of Christ's sufferings, it does so most eminently insofar as He is the Head of humanity, so that His actions become words of all the members united to Him.⁶¹ Accordingly, in the words of St. Thomas:

. . . in Christo non solum fruit gratia sicut in quodam nomine singulari, sed sicut in capite totius Ecclesiae, cui omnes ununtur sicut capiti membra, ex quibus constituitur mystice una persona. Et exinde est quod meritum Christi se extendit ad alios, in quantum sunt membra eius; sicut etiam in uno homine actio capitis aliquantè pertinet ad omnia membra, eius, quia non solum sibi sentit, sed omnibus suis membris.⁶²

Sed peccatum Adae, qui constitutus est a Deo principium totius naturae, ad alios per carnis propagationem derivatur. Et similiter meritum Christi, qui est a Deo constitutus caput omnium hominum quantum ad gratiam, se extendit ad omnia eius membra.⁶³

The singular meriting of salvation is referred to as follows:

. . . Christo data est gratia non solum sicut singulari personae, sed in quantum est caput Ecclesiae, ut scilicet ab ipso redundaret ad membra. . . . Manifestum est autem quod quicumque in gratia constitutus propter iustitiam patitur, ex hoc ipso mereatur sibi salutem. . . . Unde Christus non solum per suam passionem sibi, sed etiam omnibus suis membris meruit salutem.⁶⁴

Consequently, if Christ, not only as an individual, but as the Head of others, merited salvation through His voluntary Passion, it likewise

⁵⁹ *Cont. Gent.*, IV, c. 55, ad 11.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, ad 26. To be noted here is the following remark of Prat: "The majority of modern authors adopt the principle of solidarity, already clearly stated by St. Thomas," *Op. cit.*, II, p. 446.

⁶¹ Cf. Hugou, *De Verbo Incarnato*, p. 669.

⁶² *Sacramenta*, III, q. 19, a. 4.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, ad lum.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, q. 48, a. 1.

follows that He so satisfied, namely, in a vicarious manner, as the divinely-appointed Representative of the human race. All humanity, in turn, by virtue of the solidarity existing between them and Christ, likewise participate most effectively in both the Saviour's satisfaction and its fruits.⁶⁵

By the grace of His Headship, Christ has communicated to mankind all that He has received and accomplished:

Satisfactio Christi habet effectum in nobis in quantum incorporamur ei ut membra capiti. . . . Membra autem oportet capiti esse conformia. Et ideo, sicut passionem primo quidem habuit gratiam in anima cum passibilitate corporis, et per eam, per passionem ipsius liberamur quidem a reatu cuiuslibet poenae. . . .⁶⁶

Quia enim ipse est caput nostrum, per passionem suam, quam ex caritate et obedientia sustinuit, liberavit nos, tanquam membra sua, a peccatis. . . . Sicut enim naturale corpus est unum, ex membrorum diversitate consistens, ita tota Ecclesia, quae est mysticum corpus Christi, computatur quasi una persona cum suo capite, quod est Christus.⁶⁷

The doctrine of the Mystical Body, therefore, is in itself the basis of the mysterious but real solidarity between the Saviour and humanity, whereby the vicarious satisfaction of the innocent Christ was not only possible, but highly acceptable before God the Father.

The Mystery par excellence is the design conceived by God from all eternity, but revealed only in the Gospel, to save all men without distinction of race, identifying them with His well beloved Son in the unity of the Mystical Body.⁶⁸

The motive of love.

As already stated in the Status Quaestionis, the analytical demonstration for the argument proposed by St. Thomas whereby the suffering of death by Christ out of love and obedience is said to procure a superabundant satisfaction, will be based upon the reasons given in question 48, article 2, part III of the *Summa*. Although the motive of Christ's voluntary obedience in itself proceeds from, and presupposes love, an integral analysis of the Thomistic concept from, and presupposes inquiry into the nature of this obedience and its absolute voluntariness on the part of Christ who gave it. The great importance and value of the voluntariness of Christ's obedience is readily recognized when it is recalled that one of the essential elements necessary to an act of real satisfaction is the voluntariness, or free election, on the

⁶⁵ Cf. Billuart, *De Mysteriorum Christi*, diss. 10, a. 2.

Note: Charity, the *sine qua non* of merit, is the motive of Christ's satisfaction; consequently, His satisfaction is also meritorious. Whatever is said therefore relative to the merits of Christ likewise applies to His vicarious satisfaction.

⁶⁶ Cf. also Veste, *op. cit.*, p. 354ff.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, a. 1.

⁶⁸ Frat, *op. cit.*, I, p. 308.

part of the person who desires to atone for an injury inflicted; this is particularly true when such an atonement is vicarious in its nature. These considerations concerning the obedience of Christ will immediately follow the analysis of the motive of love.

St. Thomas gives three reasons probative of the fact that the greatness of the love of Christ in His suffering the death of the Cross was such that God loved this act more than He detested the offense, and as a result of which Christ is said to have satisfied: 1.) the greatness (*magnitudo*) of the love out of which He suffered—that is, the act of Christ's offering of Himself out of love for God and mankind is of a morally infinite value. Since the possessor or source of actions (*principium quod*) in Christ is the Divine Person of the Word, it follows that His actions or operations will of necessity have an infinite value; 2.) the dignity of His own life—that is, the life of Jesus Christ, the God-Man, which was freely given by Him for the Redemption of the human race. Admittedly the greatest testimony that can be given in proof of human love is that one should lay down his own life. "Greater love than this no one has, that one lay down his life for his friends." (John, 15:13); 3.) the greatness of the sufferings and sorrows He assumed—that is, Christ, as it were in addition to His actual death, further testified to the greatness of His love by sustaining every suffering possible (according to genus, not species), and to the greatest extent.

Ille proprie satisfacit pro offensa qui exhibet offenso id quod aeque vel magis diligit quam oderit offensam. Christus autem, ex caritate et obedientia patiendo, mains aliquid Deo exhibuit quam exigeret recompensatio totius offensae humani generis.

Primo quidem, propter magnitudinem caritatis ex qua patiebatur. Secundo, propter dignitatem vitae suae, quam pro satisfactione ponebat, quae erat vita Dei et hominis. Tertio, propter generalitatem passionis et magnitudinem doloris assumpti. . . .⁶⁹

In this one act of love, and in the above reasons which testify to its greatness, is to be found the essence of the Thomistic concept of the vicarious satisfaction of Christ. As will be discussed later, St. Thomas indicates clearly and cogently that, while Christ suffered death as the just punishment for the sins of mankind, His death was above all and most eminently a grand act of love.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 2.

⁷⁰ The importance of the motive of love (and obedience) relative to the Thomistic concept itself will be given its proper evaluation in Chapter Five. Then it will be seen that the satisfaction of Christ, according to St. Thomas, is primarily a moral reparation, and secondarily a penal expiation.

Reference may be made here to the definition of charity given by St. Thomas: " . . . caritas non solum significat amorem Dei, sed etiam amicitiam quamdam ad ipsum; quae quidem super amorem addit mutuum redemptionem cum quadam mutua communicatione. . . ." *Summa*, I-II, q. 65, a. 5.

Strictly, therefore, charity adds to love a certain perfection that proceeds from

The reasons cited by the Angelic Doctor are quite evidently not exclusive of each other; rather may they be considered as three expressions of the one, same act of love given by Christ. His own death proves His love, and the mode of His suffering provides still further evidence of its intensity. In other words, the greatness of Christ's love (and hence its power to atone) flows first, from the infinite value attached to the acts of the Person of the Word; secondly from the mode or external manifestation of His love, as indicated by the greatness of the sufferings and sorrows He assumed.

That the satisfactory actions performed by Jesus Christ were of infinite value has already been demonstrated in the preceding chapter.⁷¹ There it was stated that the value (or greatness) of moral actions is to be measured according to the use of the natural and supernatural powers of the person, and according to his own personal dignity. In Christ the personal principle to which is attributed His act of love manifested in His death by crucifixion is the infinite Son of God. The value or greatness of this act of love therefore proceeds from the fact that He, as the Word of God made flesh, is divine and infinite. Therefore, the love (and obedience) offered by Christ, since it is the theandric act of a Divine Person, is of infinite value; and by virtue of its greatness, it is an act of love that pleases God not equally, but more than the offense of sin displeased Him. Wherefore the Angelic Doctor concludes that Christ satisfied—and superabundantly.

Ad satisfaciendum autem pro peccato totius humani generis mors Christi sufficiens fuit. Quia, quamvis secundum humanam naturam solum mortuus fuerit tamen, ex dignitate personae patientis, quae est persona Filii Dei, mors eius redidit periosam. Quia . . . sicut majoris est criminis alicui personae inferre injuriam quod major persona pro aliis se subiaciat voluntariae passioni.⁷²

Christ, in His acceptance and suffering of the punishment due sin, crowned all the actions of His life with the great, total immolation of Himself on Calvary. However, it must be noted that He accepted death not as an end in itself, not as a mere suffering of death for the sake, but rather did He, motivated by love, offer His life with the intention and will to have it repair the injury inflicted by

a high esteem of the thing loved. Hence all charity (*caritas*) is love, but not all love is charity. In reference to Christ, the term *love* always expresses charity to an infinite degree.

Note: The love manifested by Christ is, by virtue of His human nature, a real actual emotion or *passio* as well. Cf. *Summa*, III, q. 15, a. 4. It is a human love to be attributed to Christ in the same way in which reference is made to His joy, desire, or sadness. However, by virtue of the hypostatic union, this same love is also divine, and consequently of an infinite value.

⁷¹ See section on "Values or Perfection of Christ's satisfaction," footnote 45.

⁷² *Cont. Gent.*, IV, c. 35, ad 24.

sin, to return to God the honor that was refused Him. According to St. Thomas, it is this motive of love that imparts to Christ's satisfaction its true reparatory value. The Sacrifice of the Cross was, in this sense, but the external measure or manifestation of Christ's interior love and obedience that motivated the act.⁷³ In reference again to the value of this love, St. Thomas states:

Tantum bonum fuit quod Christiani voluntarie passus est, quod propter hoc bonum in natura humana inventum, Deus placatus est super omni offensa generis humani. . . .⁷⁴

. . . per passionem Christi est sublata odii causa: tum propter ablationem peccati; tum propter recompensationem acceptabilioris boni.⁷⁵

In the sorrows and sufferings that accompanied His actual death, Christ provided before God and man as it were an additional testimony of the greatness of His love. If it is admitted that the least suffering of Christ, whether in kind or time, would have more than sufficed for the redemption of humanity,⁷⁶ how then can it be denied that the excruciating agonies of mind, heart, body, and soul, physical and moral, are to be attributed to the singular greatness of His love—love of God, love of mankind, and hatred of sin?

In his attempt, therefore, to indicate still further the greatness of the love of Christ, the Angelic Doctor, in question 46, articles 5 and 6, part III of the *Summa*, has painted a vivid detailed, and complete picture of the sufferings (*passiones et dolores*) borne by Christ in His Passion and death.⁷⁷

In article 5 St. Thomas demonstrates the fact that Christ endured

⁷³ As will be indicated later, St. Thomas does not exclude the value of the material element (expiation of punishment due sin) involved in satisfaction. The penalty of death due to sin is but the material aspect of satisfaction; the more important formal element is to be found in the motive of Christ's love from which proceeds the reparatory value of satisfaction.

⁷⁴ *Summa*, III, q. 49, a. 4.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, ad 2um.

⁷⁶ "Secundum sufficientiam, una minima passio Christi sufficit ad redimendum genus humanum ab omnibus peccatis. Sed secundum conventiviam, sufficiens fuit quod pateretur omnia genera passionum. . . ." *Summa*, III, q. 46, a. 5, ad 3um.

⁷⁷ St. Thomas speaks here only of the sufferings sustained by Christ and inflicted *ab extrinseco*, whether simply corporal as scourging, or spiritual as blasphemy. These are opposed to corporal sufferings *ab intrinseco* which in turn would include bodily ills or sickness (and it was not fitting that Christ suffer these), and sufferings relative to the needs of the body (hunger), or the afflictions of the sensitive part of the soul (sadness)—both of which Christ did suffer. Cf. Cajetan, *Summa*, III, q. 46, a. 5.

Finally it is to be noted that it was not necessary for Christ to endure every human suffering according to *Summa*, III, q. 46, a. 5. The seven reasons cited by St. Thomas for the fitness of Christ's death in relation to genus. Cf. *Responsio* in *Summa*, III, q. 46, a. 4) have been given in the preceding chapter in the section on the necessity of Christ's satisfaction. Cf. also *ibid.*, arts. 9, 10, 11.

every human suffering *secundum genus* according to the following analysis: He suffered—

- 1.) at the hands of men in every station of life: Passus est enim aliquid et a gentilibus et a Judaeis; a masculis et feminis, ministris eorum, et popularibus. . . Passus est etiam a principibus, et a sicut patet de Juda eum prodante, et Petro ipsum negante.

Passus est in variis ways: phemias contra eum dictas; in honore et gloria per irrisiones et contumelias et illatas; in rebus per hoc quod etiam vestibus spoliatus est: in anima per tristitiam, faedum et timorem; in corpore per vulnera et flagella.

- 3.) in all the members of His body: Passus est enim Christus in capite pungentium spinarum coronam; in manibus et pedibus fixationem clavorum; in facie alapas et sputa; et in toto corpore flagella. Fuit etiam passus secundum omnem sensum corporeum: secundum tactum quidem, flagellatus et clavis confixus; secundum gustum, felle et aceto potatus; secundum olfactum, in loco fetido cadaverum mortuorum. . . secundum auditum, iacessit vocibus blasphemantium et irridentium; secundum visum, "videns matrem et discipulum quem diligebat," fientes.⁷⁸

Then in article 6 of the same question, St. Thomas states that the sorrow or anguish (*dolor*), both sensible and interior, was in Christ the greatest possible among the sorrows of this present life.⁷⁹ The reasons are to be found—

- 1.) in the causes of His sorrow: Nam dolor sensibilis causa fuit laesio corporalis. Quae acerbitatem habuit tum propter generalitatem passionis, tum etiam ex genere passionis. Quia mors confixorum in cruce est acerbissima. . .
- 2.) in His own susceptibility to sufferings: Nam et secundum corpus erat optime complexionatus, cum corpus eius fuerit formatum miraculose operatione Spiritus Sancti. . . Anima etiam, secundum vires interiores, efficacissime apprehendit omnes causas tristitiae.
- 3.) in His unwillingness to mitigate His sorrows: Nam in aliis patientibus mitigatur tristitia interior, et etiam dolor exterior, ex aliqua consideratione rationis, per quandam derivationem seu redundantiam a superioribus viribus ad inferiores. Quod in Christo patiente non fuit. . .
- 4.) in His will to accept the greatest sorrows in proportion to the greatness of the fruit to be acquired thereby: . . . ex hoc quod passio illa et dolor a Christo fuerunt assumpta voluntarie, propter finem liberationis hominum a peccato. Et ideo tantam quantitatem doloris assumpsit quae esset proportionata magnitudini fructus qui inde sequebatur.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ *Summa*, III, q. 46, a. 4. "Adverte quod Auctor summarie pertransit generalitatem passionum Christi; nam si adamasim dinumerandas essent omnes fieret." Cajetan, *ibid.*

⁷⁹ . . . in Christo patiente fuit verus dolor: et sensibilis, qui causatur ex apprehensione alicujus nocivi, qui tristitia dicitur. Uterque autem dolor in Christo fuit maximus inter dolores praesentis vitae.' *Summa*, III, q. 46, a. 6.

⁸⁰ *Summa*, III, q. 46, a. 6. St. Thomas also states that "secundum rei veritatem, tristitia aliqua laudabilis

According to Garrigou-Lagrange, the three principal reasons explanatory of Christ's suffering so great a passion are first, in order that He might give to men the supreme testimony of His love; secondly, in order that He might fulfill in a most perfect manner His glorious mission as the Saviour of all humanity; thirdly, in order that He might attain the highest glory of victory, namely, the victory over sin, the devil, and death.⁸¹

As indicated and expressed so often and forcefully by the Angelic Doctor, the very essence of the Redemption is to be found, above all things else, in the Saviour's theandric act of love manifested in His Passion and Death; this love, of infinite value, is in itself the very price of Redemption:

Sciendum autem est quod mors Christi virtutem satisfaciendi habuit ex caritate ipsius, qua voluntarie mortem sustinuit. . . .⁸²

The *virtus satisfaciendi* referred to above by St. Thomas proceeds from the infinite value of the love of Christ suffering and dying. Herein is contained the divine expression of the Saviour's zeal and desire to return to God the honor and glory taken from Him by sin, to make manifest His infinite justice and mercy, to restore men to the state of friendship and grace with their Creator. The mind, will, heart, and energies of Christ were so united to God that whatever He did, He did always for the manifestation of His glory, justice, and goodness. In this union is the essence of love.⁸³

Jesus Christ delivered Himself up to death; He delivered Himself up in order to save us; and He delivered Himself up through love: this is the epitome of His active part in the tragedy of Calvary.⁸⁴

est . . . quando sollicit procedit ex sancto amore, ut puta cum aliquis tristatur de peccatis propriis vel alienis. Assumitur etiam ut utilis ad finem satisfactionis pro peccato. . . Et ideo Christus, ut satisfaceret pro peccatis omnium hominum, assumpsit tristitiam maximam quantitate absoluta, non tamen excedentem regulam rationis.' *Ibid.*, ad 2um.

In reference to articles 5 and 6, cf. Voste, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-315; Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, pp. 403-405, 445-453.

⁸¹ Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, ex parte nostra, ex parte Christi et ex parte Dei "Haec motiva sumuntur ex parte nostra, ex parte nostra, Christus debet Patris: Homines hac suprema manifestatione amoris indigebant; Deus Pater per hanc viam voluit suam missionem modo perfectissimo adimplere; *Ibid.*, p. 452.

⁸² Cont. *Gent.*, IV, c. 55, ad 22.

⁸³ That which Christ Himself taught, the great commandment of love of God and neighbor, He fulfilled constantly in His daily life—but preeminently in His death offered for the Redemption of mankind. "In this we have come to know His love, that He laid down his life for us." (1 *John*, 3:16). Cf. Tanqueray, *The Spiritual Life*, II, p. 184.

⁸⁴ Prat. *op. cit.*, II, p. 184.

Reference may fittingly be made here to St. Thomas's exegesis of the Parable of the Good Shepherd, *Comen. Super Joann.*, c. 10, lect. 3.

St. Anselm in *Meditat.* XII

Whatever the mode of human expression relative to the sufferings, the Passion and Death of Our Lord, be it scientific or otherwise, the one, magnificent, and inescapable truth becomes eventually incapable of expression—for the truth is in itself a mystery, a mystery of divine love. According to St. Thomas, it is this love of Christ, theandric and of infinite value (*magnitudo amoris*), whereby He, the God-Man (*dignitas vitae*), offered His own life's blood and endured the greatest sufferings and sorrows (*magnitudo doloris*) on behalf of mankind,—it is this love that pleased God more than the sins of the world displeased Him; in a word, Christ, by suffering and dying out of love (and obedience) satisfied, and superabundantly.

Nullo enim est actus caritatis perfectior quam quod homo pro amore alienius etiam mortem sustinet; secundum quod ipsemet Dominus dicit (Joan. 15:13): "Majoram caritatem nemo habet quam quod animam suam ponat quis pro amicis suis."⁸³

The motive of obedience.

Concerning the motive of Christ's obedience to the will of the Father in suffering the death of the Cross, it is to be noted that, as it were, but the specified manifestation of His love towards the Father. In other words, Christ gave the greatest manifestation of love possible to both God and men; to mankind particularly by the mode of His Passion and Death, to the Father most especially by His filial act of loving obedience to His command, namely, that the redemption of mankind was to be wrought in the blood of His own Son. The obedience of Christ, then, proceeds from His love, and in such a way that neither His obedience nor His love are mutually ex-

tionis causa sola fuit dilectio tua. . . . Multum quidem contulisti Creator, sed longe plus Redemptor." Migne, *P. L.*, CLVIII, c. 772.

Peter Lombard refers to the love of Christ as follows: " . . . et videntes quanta caritate nos dilexerit, ut pro nobis scilicet moreretur, monemur accendimurque ad diligendum eum, qui pro nobis tanta fecit, et sic soluti a peccato et diabolo justificamur." *P. L.*, CXCII, c. 1080 (*III Sent.*, d. 19).

The Council of Trent states: " . . . dilectissimus Unigenitus suus, Dominus noster Jesus Christus, qui cum esset inimici, propter nimiam caritatem, quam et pro nobis Deo Patri satisfecit." D.E., 799.

A final reference should be made here to the following observation of Garrigou-Lagrange: "Redemptio, ut de facto voluta est a Deo, est quidem per modum meriti, satisfactionis et sacrificii, sed absolute loquendo concepi potest, ut videtur, dicta et sacrificio proprie dicto; quia actus theandricus amoris iam de se plus generosum amorem nisi manifestet omnia peccata. Sed nos homines non agnoscimus tioneis. Sic communiter dicitur per generosam acceptationem alienius afflictionis. *Op. cit.*, p. 418, footnote 2.

clusive; rather do they serve as complements one for the other. In a word, Christ suffered out of love and obedience: out of obedience He fulfilled the precept of love towards God and men; out of love He was obedient in accepting the mandate given Him by the Father.⁸⁶

To analyse the motive of Christ's obedience in His Passion therefore, is, by virtue of its meritorious nature, but another means of demonstrating further the magnitude of His infinite love wherein He atoned for the sins of the world.

On the part of Christ His redeeming death is an act of obedience; and this act is meritorious in regard to the humanity which it saves, in regard to the Father whom it renders propitious, and in regard to the Son who owes His exaltation to it. We conclude from this, both directly and by analysis, that this act was free, since without freedom its merit is not conceivable; and that it was a response to a divine command, since there is no obedience where there is no command.⁸⁷

An integral analysis of the motive of obedience in Christ would of its very nature involve: 1.) the complex, theological exposition of the freedom of Christ's will, and the existence of, and conformity between His human and divine wills; 2.) the relation of Christ's freedom to the necessity of His death as the penalty for sin; 3.) the difficult question of reconciling Christ's perfect liberty with the command given Him by the Father. However, these are separate questions (and are treated as such by St. Thomas) which, by reason of their length and complexity, cannot be admitted here in their entirety. Further, essential to the concept of vicarious satisfaction is the one fact alone that Christ, in His death, did offer this obedience to the Father, and of His own free will, in the manner expressed by St. Thomas, *Summa*, III, q. 47, arts. 1-3, while at the same time, the precept given Him by the Father is to be considered in itself rigorous and absolute.

1.) As already noted, the theological concept of vicarious satisfaction of its very nature presupposes absolute voluntariness on the part of the person atoning. Voluntariness, however, proceeds from freedom of will, which, informed by charity, in turn imparts to satisfaction its meritorious value. This presupposition obtains in much the same way as the Redemption itself is said to presuppose the Incarnation and original sin, or as the solidarity between Christ and men is presupposed by the doctrine of the Mystical Body. It will be sufficient, therefore, to state here in reference to the will of Christ

⁸⁶ Cf. Billuart, *De Mysteriorum Christi*, diss. 10, a. 1.

⁸⁷ Prat, *op. cit.*, II, p. 187.

Here likewise may be mentioned the definitions of obedience given by St. Thomas: "Obedientia est specialis virtus: et ejus speciale obiectum est preceptum tacitum vel expressum." *Summa*, II-II, q. 104, a. 2. "Obedientia reddit promptam hominis voluntatem ad implendam voluntatem alterius, scilicet preceptantis." *Ibid.*, ad 3^{um}.

that, if He possessed a perfect human nature, complete and integral, it must follow that in all His actions, He likewise exercised perfect liberty of will. Secondly, there is in Christ no opposition perfect to the divine will, likewise His by virtue of the divine nature; on the contrary, even though there exist two wills in Christ and consequently two sources of actions, both are said to converge in perfect harmony in the moral order.

Quidquid fuit in humana natura Christi, movebatur nutu divinae voluntatis: non tamen sequitur quod in Christo non fuerit motus voluntatis proprius naturae humanae. . . . Licet enim voluntas non possit interius moveri ab aliqua creatura, interius tamen movetur a Deo. Et sic etiam Christus secundum voluntatem humanam sequebatur voluntatem divinam; secundum illud Psalmi 39 (9): "Ut facerem voluntatem tuam, Deus meus, volui."⁸⁸

Et ideo, cum in Christo ponatur voluntas ut ratio, necesse est ibi ponere electionem: et per consequens liberum arbitrium, cuius actus est electio.⁸⁹

Finally, in regard to the conformity of Christ's human will with the divine, St. Thomas states:

Voluntas autem Dei erat ut Christus dolores et passiones et mortem pateretur non quod ista essent a Deo volita secundum se, sed ex ordine ad finem humanae salutis. Unde patet quod Christus, secundum voluntatem sensualitatis, et secundum voluntatem rationis quae consideratur per modum naturae, aliquid poterat velle quam Deus. Sed secundum voluntatem quae est per modum rationis, semper velle volebat quod Deus. Quod patet ex hoc ipso quod dicit: "Non sicut ego volo, sed sicut tu." (Matt. 26:39)⁹⁰

The absolute voluntariness of Christ's actions becomes still more evident in view of the love out of which He offered His own life. One cannot profess real love in the suffering of an undeserved penalty, particularly when that penalty is one of death, unless he does so of his own free will. In other words, the voluntariness of Christ is argued from His own external manifestation of love as great as it was. Without this motive of love, His voluntariness could be questioned, with it, His voluntariness is of necessity presupposed. Otherwise, there results a contradiction and an ultimate *reductio ad absurdum*.⁹¹

2.) The necessity of Christ's Passion and Death has already been discussed in the question concerning the necessity of satisfaction in general. There it was seen that, given the preordination of God, it

⁸⁸ *Summa*, III, q. 18, a. 1, ad lum.

In articles 2 and 3 of this same question St. Thomas considers the voluntas sensualitatis and voluntas rationis (ut natura and ut ratio).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, a. 4.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, a. 5. Cf. also Riviere, *Étude Théologique*, p. 279ff. In direct reference to the Passion and Death of Christ, St. Thomas alludes almost constantly to the full freedom of Christ's will. *Summa*, III, q. 46-50.

⁹¹ It is to be noted again that the free will informed by charity is the principle of merit; and since all of Christ's actions were meritorious, it follows that His satisfaction, given out of love and obedience, is likewise free. Cf. *III Sent.*, d. 18, q. un., a. 4.

was not possible for man to be redeemed in any way other than through the Passion and Death of Christ.⁹² In view of this conclusion, was the freedom of Christ thereby vitiated in His suffering and death? In other words, did Christ die of His own free will or out of necessity? According to the analysis of St. Thomas, the necessity of Christ's Passion and Death in regard to His freedom of will, was a *final necessity*, that is, that which is necessary in order to obtain the end in view. Such a necessity, however, is external and in no way effects the liberty or voluntariness of the person who acts to obtain that end. The necessity involved here is of its nature neither absolute nor coercive; consequently, the fact remains that Christ suffered and died voluntarily:

. . . necessarium multipliciter dicitur. Uno modo, quod secundum sui naturam impossibile est aliter se habere. Et sic manifestum est quod non fuit necessarium Christum pati; neque ex parte Dei, neque ex parte hominis.

Alio modo dicitur liquid necessarium ex aliquo exteriori. Quod quidem si sit causa efficiens vel movens, facit necessitatem coactionis. . . . Si vero illud exterius quod necessitatem inducit, sit finis, dicitur aliquid necessarium ex suppositione finis: quando scilicet finis aliquis aut nullo modo potest esse, aut non potest esse convenienter, nisi tali fine praesupposito.

Non fuit ergo necessarium Christum pati necessitate coactionis: neque ex parte Dei, qui Christum definiit pati; neque ex parte ipsius Christi, qui voluntarie passus est. Fuit autem necessarium necessitate finis.⁹³

3.) The final question concerning the freedom of Christ's will in relation to the command given Him by the Father touches directly upon the obedience manifested by Christ in His Passion and Death. Proceeding from the fact that Christ received the rigorous command to lay down His life and to take it up again, the following questions remain to be answered: In what manner is Christ said to have obeyed such a mandate voluntarily? Secondly, how does Christ's voluntary

⁹² Cf. *Summa*, III, q. 46, arts. 2-4. These have already been cited in the section on necessity of satisfaction, Chapter Two.

⁹³ *Summa*, III, q. 46, a. 1. The necessity of end is to be understood in three ways: "Primo quidem, ex parte nostra, qui per ejus passionem liberati sumus. . . . Secundo, ex parte ipsius Christi, qui per humilitatem passionis meruit gloriam exaltationis. . . . Tertio, ex parte Dei, cuius definitio est circa passionem Christi praenatiatum in Scripturis. . . ." *Ibid.*, a. 1.

Cf. also Voste, *op. cit.*, p. 288ff. The full liberty of will enjoyed by Christ is further clarified by St. Thomas when he explains that, although Christ voluntarily accepted death, He does not thereby become the direct physical cause of His death, i.e., He did not will His death directly, but indirectly in the sense that He was able to prevent His death, but did not. This follows from the fact that, whatever in Christ was natural according to His human nature, was subject to His will because of the power of His divinity; hence the power in Christ to have His soul remain united to His body or not. The direct cause of His death, however, must be, and is attributed to the executors themselves.

Cf. *Summa*, III, q. 47, a. 1, and note 1 (ed. Mariotti); *Comp. Theol.*, c. 230.

obedience remain unimpaired in view of the Scriptural statement: "He who has not spared even his own Son but has delivered him for us all. . . ." (Rom. 8:32) ?

In regard to the precept given Christ by the Father, namely, that of laying down His life and of taking it up again,⁸⁴ St. Thomas demonstrates both the freedom of Christ's will in His obedience to the precept, and the conformity of His human will to the divine will:

Dicendum quod obedientia, etsi importet necessitatem respectu eius quod praecipitur, tamen importat voluntatem respectu impletionis praeccepti. Et talis fuit voluntas Christi. Nam ipsa passio et mors, secundum se considerata, naturali prece. . . .⁸⁵

It is evident, then, that, given the necessity implied in any precept, one still remains free as to whether or not he will fulfill the precept—voluntarily or involuntarily. In other words, the necessity involved in a precept derives from the object morally, not from the subject. Liberty is found essentially in immunity from subjective necessity, without excluding the moral necessity of the law imposed. Christ, therefore, in His obedience to the divine precept, exercised His unlimited freedom of will.⁸⁶

In reference to the *traditio*, or handing over of Christ by God the Father, the Angelic Doctor vindicates Christ's voluntary acceptance of death out of obedience by explaining the manner or mode of this *traditio*. According to St. Thomas, God did not spare His own Son, but handed Him over in three ways: 1.) according to the divine preordination from all eternity that He would hand over Christ to the Passion and Death for the redemption of mankind; 2) by inspiring Christ with the will to suffer; 3.) by not protecting Him from the Passion and His persecutors.⁸⁷ Further, that there is no contrariety between the *traditio* of the Father and Christ's own voluntary offering of His life is demonstrated by St. Thomas as follows:

⁸⁴ "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have the power to lay it down, and I have the power to take it up again. Such is the command I have received from my Father." (John, 10:18).

⁸⁵ Cf. also *Comment. Super Joann.*, c. 10, lect. 4.

⁸⁶ Cf. *Voste, op. cit.*, p. 341, and the reference therein indicated to the *De Incarnatione* of Faquet.

As stated by Prat: ". . . it is the victim (Christ) who offers Himself and the Father intervenes, not only to accept the offering, but to command it." *Op. cit.*, II, p. 187.

Finally, it is to be understood that Christ, in His obedience, is subject to His Father not absolutely, but only according to His human nature which *ex sui conditione* is subject to God. Cf. *Summa*, III, q. 20, a. 1.

⁸⁷ *Summa*, III, q. 47, a. 3.

Dicendum quod Christus, secundum quod Deus tradidit semetipsum in mortem eadem voluntate et actione qua et Pater tradidit eum. Sed in quantum homo, tradidit semetipsum voluntate a Patre inspirata. Unde non est contrarietas in hoc quod Pater tradidit Christum, et ipse tradidit semetipsum.⁸⁸

The divine will, therefore, while it is always efficacious in its decrees, does not impose necessity on the actions of men because the divine will itself so wills that these acts be fulfilled freely. Wherefore God does not destroy, but rather actualizes human liberty; and consequently, the Saviour's will, inspired by the Father, freely accepted death out of love and obedience.⁸⁹

Finally, the Angelic Doctor cites three reasons for the fitness of Christ's obedience: it was most fitting that Christ offer His life out of obedience to the Father's will—1.) that men, damned as disobedient, would be justified through Christ's obedience; 2.) that there might be added a greater perfection to the sacrifice made for the reconciliation of men; 3.) that out of obedience to God, He would thereby conquer the devil and merit victory.⁹⁰

The atonement or satisfaction given by Christ in His Passion and Death was indeed a work of love, a theandric act of love towards God and all humanity. His atonement was also the same in kind as the offense, for, even as the sin of Adam was one of disobedience and pride, so was the reparation of the Cross an act of obedience and humility. His death was an act of obedience to the will of the Father that He should give His own life's blood for the sins of the world, an obedience above all inspired by love, and so willed by Christ that it was at once perfect and fully voluntary.

As expressed by St. Thomas, any precept of God is given by Him for the exercise of virtues among men. Man in turn will then please God in proportion to the perfection that accompanies these acts of virtue, and among these charity alone is the greatest. Wherefore, since Christ was perfect in His charity, He was most especially obedient to God:

Inter alias virtutes praecipua caritas est, ad quam omnes aliae referuntur. Christus igitur, dum actum caritatis perfectissime implevit, Deo maxime obediens fuit. Sic igitur invenitur Christus, mortem sustinens pro salute hominum et ad gloriam Dei Patris, Deo maxime obediens fuisse, actum caritatis perfectum exequendo.⁹¹

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, ad 2um.

⁸⁹ Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, p. 407.

⁹⁰ *Summa*, III, q. 47, a. 2.

Christ's obedience was given to the Father in a manner so perfect that He fulfilled in His satisfaction all the moral precepts which are founded upon charity, all the ceremonial precepts such as were ordained by law for true sacrifices and oblations, and all the judicial precepts by which satisfaction for an injury was to be made. Cf. *Ibid.*, ad 1um.

Cf. also *Voste, op. cit.*, p. 338f.

⁹¹ *Cont. Gent.*, IV, c. 55, ad 14.

Eadem ratione Christus passus est ex caritate, et obedientia: quia etiam precepta caritatis non nisi ex obedientia implevit; et obediens fuit ex dilectione ac Patrem praeipientem.¹⁰²

¹⁰² *Summa*, III, q. 47, a. 2, ad 3um.

Similarly, "... obedientia habet laudem ex eo quod ex caritate procedit: dicit enim Gregorius ... quod obedientia non servili metu, sed caritatis affectu servanda est: non timore poenae, sed amore justitiae." *Summa*, II-II, q. 104, a. 3.

As expressed by Prat: "The offering which He makes of Himself, at the command of God, has the value of an act of obedience. . . the command intimated by the Father and the voluntary obedience of the Son are, on the part of both the Son and the Father, an equal and sovereign manifestation of love." *Op. cit.*, II, p. 186.

CHAPTER FOUR

OBJECTIONS

As already indicated, the doctrine of vicarious satisfaction as presented by St. Thomas, is in itself considered the essence of the mystery of the Redemption. The dogma of the Redemption, however, embraces other aspects not treated in this analysis, and which combined constitute the integral dogma of the Catholic faith. The errors and heretical interpretations of the dogma of the Redemption as such would, therefore, demand an equally comprehensive refutation that properly does not pertain to the limited scope of the present treatise. This becomes all the more evident when it is realized that an integral refutation of errors concerning this great truth would necessitate not only an inquiry into the particular error itself as such, but would also demand an exposition of the philosophical system or school of thought in which the error is said to have its source. According to the classification given by Riviere, these various systems date principally from the era of the Protestant Reformation, and include the schools of Rationalism, Liberalism, and Modernism.¹

The objections and responses given below therefore, although they have their origin in the above mentioned systems and in their erroneous doctrines relative to the dogma of the Redemption, are included here only with a view towards the further clarification and

¹ In reference to the Protestant concept of Redemption, cf. Riviere, *Étude Théologique*, p. 381ff.; the Rationalist concept, p. 411ff.; the Liberalist view, p. 458ff.; the Modern doctrines, p. 498ff.

Cf. also Riviere, *Étude Historique*, pp. 15-27.

Briefly, the various errors of these systems *a propos* of the dogma of the Redemption may be classified as follows: 1.) Errors of excess: the Protestants, adhering to Luther and Calvin, attributed too much to the satisfaction of Christ so that as a result Christ is said to have taken upon Himself the sins of mankind in such a way that He Himself became odious before God, and suffers the punishment of the damned. 2.) Errors of defect: as a reaction against the grossly exaggerated notions of the Reformation, the Rationalists and Liberal Protestants went to the opposite extreme and nullified the objective value of Christ's Redemptive work of satisfaction. As proposed particularly by the Socinians, Christ wrought man's salvation only insofar as He gave them the doctrine of salvation through His preaching, and by His suffering and death provided an ideal or example to be imitated in much the same way as that of the martyrs. At most His death is nothing more than a moral impetus to penitence. In a word, the foregoing demonstration of Christ's vicarious satisfaction cannot be admitted. Similarly do the Modernists maintain that such a dogma can be but the fruit of theological speculation, in the sense that it is not to be found in the Gospels, and consequently remains Pauline and merely personal.

Cf. Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, p. 415; Hugon, *Le Mystere de la Redemption*, pp. 56-63; Billuart, *De Incarnatione*, diss. 19, a. 4.

more precise knowledge of the Thomistic concept itself; and, in the manner characteristic of all solutions to objections concerning a mystery of faith, are being considered here to demonstrate that the mystery of Christ's vicarious satisfaction, while admittedly above reason, is not contradictorily opposed to it. Following a statement of the three objections included by St. Thomas in q. 48, art. 2, part III of the *Summa*, the principal difficulties will be considered according to the following twofold division: 1.) those objections, however formulated, that have their source in the erroneous conception of the nature of Christ's vicarious satisfaction; 2.) the objections based upon the apparent contradiction between God's mercy and His severe exaction of so rigorous a satisfaction.²

1. Objections posed by St. Thomas.

The first objection posed by the Angelic Doctor states that Christ was not able to make a valid satisfaction inasmuch as He Himself of satisfying belongs to the person whose sins demand that a satisfaction be made, in the same manner in which the sinner is held to confess his own sins and to have the personal contrition or sorrow necessary for their remission. Since one cannot confess or have sorrow for sins that are not properly his own, it then likewise follows that one other than the guilty person himself, cannot properly satisfy. As formulated by St. Thomas:

Ejusdem enim videtur esse satisfacere cuius est peccare: sicut patet in aliis peccatis partibus; ejusdem enim est contreri et confiteri cuius est peccare. Sed Christus non peccavit: secundum illud I Petr. 2, (22): "Qui peccatum non fecit." Ergo ipse non satisfecit propria passione.³

The response of the Angelic Doctor contains first an immediate reference to the solidarity between Christ and men by way of indicating the exact nature of the vicariousness of Christ's satisfaction as already analysed: since Christ and men form one mystical person united by the bond of charity, Christ, Himself innocent, can and does satisfy on behalf of all mankind who, with Him, form or constitute this one Mystical Body.

Dicendum quod caput et membra sunt quasi una mystica persona. Et idem satisfactio Christi ad omnes fideles pertinet sicut ad sua membra. In quantum etiam duo homines sunt unum in caritate, unus pro alio satisfacere potest. . . .⁴

St. Thomas then states:

Non autem est similis ratio de confessione et contritione: quia satisfactio

² Cf. Galtier's presentation of difficulties concerning the satisfaction of Christ, *op. cit.*, pp. 398-404.

³ *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 2.

⁴ *Ibid.*, ad hum.

consistit in actu exteriori, ad quem assumi possunt instrumenta: inter quae computantur etiam amici.⁴

Satisfaction therefore, insofar as it is considered an exterior or external act, differs essentially from those internal acts from which proceed the personal confession of, or sorrow for an offense committed. It is precisely this external aspect of satisfaction that enables a satisfactory work to be performed or given by one other than the actual offender who is responsible for the personal sin which in turn demands satisfaction. As already seen in the analysis of satisfaction, this external aspect follows logically from the fact that the reparation to be given God for the offense of sin is to be made *secundum justitiae aequalitatem*. Insofar as the reparatory act provides this equality of proportion demanded by justice, to that extent is it said to be an external act. This equality, however, although realized in an external manner, does not become a mere material proportionality, but remains formal or moral according to the value of the action or penalty sustained (price paid). In other words, satisfaction, while not an exclusively exterior act, is nevertheless given in such a way so that its measure is made in an external manner, that is, according to the equality necessary for adequately repairing the offense. It is this external aspect of satisfaction that enables one to voluntarily satisfy on behalf of another, for in providing this external equivalence demanded in satisfaction, as the Angelic Doctor states, external means or *instrumenta* may be appropriated—and among these, certainly a friend (i.e., one willing to accept the obligation of atoning) is by no means excluded.

This external element of satisfaction,⁵ neither of these can obtain the nature of contrition or confession, the sinner himself. Contrition is intended to remove directly the evil interior disposition of the sinner alone. In its essence it is sorrow for sin, a sorrow in which the sinner acknowledges the inordinate acts of his own will, and expresses the desire to direct those acts once again towards God as his ultimate end. None of this, however, is possible unless the sinner himself perform these actions.

⁶ Even though the exterior aspect of satisfaction is admitted, the counter-objection that confession is likewise an exterior act is given the following reply by Cajetan: "Nam actus exterior dupliciter dicitur. Vel ut distinguitur absolute contra interiorum: ut videre est actus exterior, imaginari est actus exterior. Et secundum hunc sensum procedit obiectio: sic enim confessio est actus exterior. —Alio modo sumitur actus exterior secundum medium. . . . Et medium rei (i.e. non medium rationis tantum) exterior dicitur, quia in aequalitate rei ad rem consistit. . . . Quia autem satisfactio in aequalitate rei ad rem consistit in actu exteriori, adaequare debetur, ut patet; ideo dicitur hic quod consistit in actu exteriori secundum medium. Et in hoc differt confessio a satisfactione in proposito."

Summa, III, q. 48, a. 2.

The same conclusion must be admitted in regard to confession, for even as it is not possible for one to have the interior disposition of contrition for the sins of another, neither can he acknowledge the guilt or sins of another by confessing in his place. In other words, by virtue of its interior nature, the contrition of one does not obtain pardon for the sin of another. Confession, by virtue of its relation to the Sacrament of Penance, is likewise personal so that one cannot in confessing another's guilt, receive the Sacrament on behalf of another. Consequently, the conclusion follows that, although one cannot confess or have sorrow for the sins of another, he can, nevertheless, satisfy in the place of another, or in a vicarious manner. As expressed again by St. Thomas:

Dicendum quod contritio ordinatur contra culpam, que ad dispositionem bonitatis vel malitiæ hominis pertinet. Et ideo pro contritionem unius alius a culpa non liberatur.—Similiter per confessionem homo se sacramentis Ecclesiæ subicit suscipienti datur, non alii.—Et ideo non est similis ratio de satisfactione, contritione et confessione.⁶

The response to the remaining two objections posed by St. Thomas (*Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 2) are restatements of what he has already demonstrated in the body of the article. The first of these may be formulated as follows:

Satisfaction does not obtain through the commission of a greater crime or offense. But the passion and death of Christ were the greatest of crimes: therefore satisfaction does not obtain through the Passion and Death of Christ.⁷

In reply, the Angelic Doctor refers again to the magnitude of Christ's love and the superabundant value of His satisfaction. He states simply and conclusively that the love of Christ suffering and dying was greater even than the malice of those who perpetrated the crime of His death. Wherefore, despite the heinousness of their deed, Christ was enabled to offer more in His satisfaction than His executioners could offend by putting Him to death. The satisfaction of Christ, since it was not only sufficient but superabundant, atoned even for the sins of those who crucified Him.⁸

⁶ *Summa*, III, Suppl., q. 13, a. 2, ad 2um. Cf. also Billot, *De Verbo Incarnato*, thesis 51, ad 1um. See Chapter Two of this thesis, section on notion of satisfaction; and Chapter Three, section on solidarity.

It must be noted again that the satisfaction given by Christ does not exempt us from personal satisfaction. It remains necessary for sinners to unite themselves to Christ through faith, love, detestation of sin, and the offering of their real satisfactory value and power by virtue, or under the influence of, the satisfaction of Christ.

⁷ Cf. *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 2.

⁸ "Dicendum quod major fuit caritas Christi patientis quam malitia crucifigendum. Et ideo plus potuit satisfacere Christus sua passione quam crucifigores offendere occidendo; tantum quod passio Christi sufficiens fuit, et superabundans,

The final objection may be formulated thus:

Satisfaction implies a certain equality in proportion to the offense. But in the satisfaction of Christ this equality is not present—for Christ suffered according to the flesh, not according to His divinity which is offended by sin. Therefore Christ did not properly satisfy.⁹

In his response St. Thomas refers immediately to the infinite dignity of the Person who assumed the human nature that suffered and died, and through which the Redemption was wrought. The value of the flesh according to which Christ suffered and died proceeds from the union of the divine and human natures in the Person of the Word; by virtue of this hypostatic union there results the infinite value of His sufferings, and as such not only equals but surpasses the offense of sin, and hence satisfaction is said to obtain superabundantly. Wherefore, as St. Thomas concludes, the dignity of the flesh of Christ is not to be valued according to the nature of the flesh alone, but according to the person who assumed the flesh; and since it is the flesh of God, it is of an infinite dignity or value.¹⁰

2. Objections—the nature of the satisfaction of Christ.

From the erroneous concept of vicarious satisfaction whereby the idea of substitution is interpreted in its literal sense, without reference to the all-important and necessary solidarity between Christ and men, preceed the following two principal objections. From these, others, not mentioned specifically as such in this treatise, may be said to have their source: (a) Christ, by substituting Himself for men in His atonement, Himself becomes a sinner; (b) Christ thereby expiates an actual punishment, that is, punishment considered as an evil inflicted for the sin committed.

(a) As already indicated, the nature of Christ's vicarious satisfaction was such that, even though He atoned most perfectly for the sins of mankind, He Himself was not thereby compelled to become an actual sinner, or assume the guilt itself consequent upon the offense given God by man, and for which he offered an adequate reparation. Furthermore, that personal sin is capable of being transferred re-

ad satisfaciendum pro peccatis crucifigentium ipsum." *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 2, ad 2um.

Cf. Chapter Two, section on 'values,' or perfection of Christ's satisfaction, and Chapter Three, section on motive of love.

⁹ Cf. Garrigou-Lagrangé, *op. cit.*, p. 419; *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 2.

¹⁰ "Dicendum quod dignitas carnis Christi non est aestimanda solum secundu[m] carnis naturam, sed secundu[m] personam assumentem, in quantum scilicet erat caro Dei: ex quo habebat dignitatem infinitam." *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 2, ad 3um. It may be noted again that the equality demanded in satisfaction is not material but formal or moral according to the value of what is offered in reparation of the offense.

Cf. Chapter Two, section on perfection of Christ's satisfaction.

mains an impossibility. Whatever its nature or gravity, sin cannot be assumed by one other than the actual sinner; this follows from the fact that culpability is essentially personal and cannot be removed unless through the sinner's own personal conversion to God. Nor does this conflict with the doctrine of the transmission of original sin. By reason of the vital bond of the transmission of original sin, as far as original sin was concerned, Mary and Christ were excluded there results a physical incorporation of the members of the human race in Adam as the head of that race. Original sin, therefore, remains a sin of nature, and as such the human race, while not participating in a personal manner in what was the personal act of Adam, does, nevertheless, receive both the guilt and the penalty thereby imparted to the human nature which was then in a sinful state. In other words, mankind, while not personally responsible, was still culpable—but only by reason of his origin. Wherefore Christ satisfied most perfectly for the offense of original sin transmitted to the human race, while He Himself remained free of its culpability. Again, that the person who gives a satisfaction for the offense of another remains wholly innocent of the crime itself is evident from that person's very motive in so satisfying, that is, his willingness to suffer another's penalty is prompted by the formal intention to atone for a guilt that is definitely not his own. Otherwise, were he to atone for an offense that was directly personal, his satisfaction could no longer be considered vicarious. It is precisely due to the innocence of the person satisfying on behalf of another that the penalty suffered and reparation given are said to receive a much greater value; for then the intention of making a real reparation is purer and its motive of love intensified. Whence the infinite greatness of the satisfaction of Christ who, Himself innocent and undefiled, offered His life for the salvation of all mankind. Hugon states:

It is precisely because He is innocent that He can make over to us the value of His expiatory act, and that our acquittal becomes a matter of justice no less than of mercy. . . .¹¹

Given the innocence of Christ in the redemptive work of satisfaction, the question is then posed: Was it not cruel and impious on the part of God to will, or to hand over the innocent Christ to suffer the penalty of death for sin whose guilt He Himself did not incur? Inasmuch as this objection has direct reference to the *traditio* of the Father which has already been explained,¹² it will suffice here to state that it would indeed be an act of both grave injustice and cruelty to

¹¹ "C'est précisément parce qu'il est innocent qu'il peut nous céder sa valeur expiatoire et que notre pardon devient affaire de justice, non moins que de valeur corde. . . ." Hugon, *Le Mystère de la Rédemption*, p. 77.

¹² Cf. Chapter Three, section on the motive of obedience relative to the *traditio* of the Father.

condemn an innocent person to suffer what he himself does not deserve—if the innocent person is not a voluntary sufferer or victim. Once the innocent sufferer manifests his complete and absolute willingness to sustain an undeserved penalty, even though it be death itself, the charge of injustice and cruelty on the part of him who permits or accepts this voluntary suffering of the innocent, cannot be admitted. On the contrary, to knowingly accept the sufferings and even death of one innocent of any crime or offense is in itself an acknowledgment of the innocent's greatness of love for both God and neighbor, a love to which he has given the greatest external expression possible in the voluntary suffering of a penalty he himself does not deserve. Of such a nature was the suffering and death of Christ, for He freely accepted out of love and obedience, the penalty attached to the sins of mankind:

Dicendum quod innocentem hominem passioni et morti tradere contra ejus voluntatem, est impium et crudele. Sic autem Deus Pater Christum non tradidit, sed inspirando ei voluntatem patiendo pro nobis.¹³

God, therefore, whatever the nature of His commands or actions, does not violate the freedom of man's will. It was in the direct and personal exercise of that liberty that Christ, out of love, so willed to accept the death of the Cross. That God should so will and accept the death of the innocent Christ is neither impious, cruel, nor unjust. In the words of the Angelic Doctor:

Ad quod ergo in contrarium de innocente objicitur, dicendum, quod tradere eum invitum, peccatum est; sed tradere voluntarium pro salute fratrum opus misericordiae est.¹⁴

Whence he concludes:

Unde patet quod non fuit impium et crudele, quod Deus Pater Christum morti voluit. . . . Non enim cogit invitum, sed complacuit voluntas qua ex caritate Christum mortem suscepit. Et hanc etiam caritatem in ejus anima operatus est. In

¹³ *Summa*, IPI, q. 47, a. 3, ad lum. Cf. also *ibid.*, ad 3um where St. Thomas compares the *traditio* of the Father to that of Judas, the Jews, and Pilate. *III Sent.*, d. 20, q. un., a. 4.

¹⁴ *Cont. Gent.*, IV, c. 55, ad 16. Cf. also *Summa*, I, q. 20, a. 4, ad lum. Here may be included the objection sometimes raised that it is contradictory or repugnant for Christ to both satisfy and receive satisfaction simultaneously. Although the same objection is posed relative to the ability of Christ to merit, and which is presupposed in satisfaction, it may nevertheless be stated here that, by reason of the two-fold nature of Christ, and the fact that His *status comprehensoris* does not exclude that of *victor*, He is able to perform the meritorious action of satisfying and at the same time to receive it without involving contradiction. Cf. *Summa*, III, q. 19, a. 3; q. 48, a. 1.

Note: This distinction and Death. The properties of each nature remain in reference to His Passion and suffering are made to God as having died precisely and distinct. Reference is made to God as having died precisely in man, while man is incapable of either. Reference is made to the death of the flesh in man, while because of the unity in the Person—similar to the death of the flesh in man, while

(b) Given the fact that Christ, by satisfying vicariously, does not thereby become a sinner or assume the guilt of sin, it will also follow that the penalty suffered by Him remains a penalty, but cannot be considered a punishment as such. Were Christ to have suffered an actual punishment, that is, a punishment considered as an evil inflicted for the sin committed, then it would be difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile this fact with that of His innocence. This is evident from what has already been demonstrated in the explanation of the nature of vicarious satisfaction, namely, that a punishment of punishment always remains personal, and is inflicted only upon the one guilty of the offense.¹⁶

Further, to interpret the penalty suffered by Christ in terms of an absolute punishment, would make at least possible the contention that He suffered the very punishment of the damned.¹⁷

Consequently, the objection that Christ sustained an actual punishment is first, a direct contradiction of His own innocence, and secondly, implies that a punishment, (as with sin in the previous objection) can be transferred as such. Punishment, however, of its very nature is inflicted as such for sin alone; punishment considered in this proper sense will always presuppose personal guilt. An innocent person cannot sustain a punishment properly so-called precisely because of His lack of guilt for which the punishment is inflicted.

Punishment cannot be transferred from one person to another without changing its nature. A debt can indeed be paid by an intermediary, but a punishment cannot be undergone by proxy. Punishment is essentially a personal thing, inseparable from the sin; if it falls upon a stranger, it is no longer a punishment.

The distinction that is to be observed, therefore, is perhaps delicate, man's soul remains immortal. Cf. *Cont. Gent.*, IV, c. 55, ad 14; *Summa*, III, q. 46, a. 12.

¹⁶ "Si loquamur de poena simpliciter, secundum quod habet rationem poenae, sic semper habet ordinem ad culpam propriam." *Summa*, I-II, q. 87, a. 7.

¹⁷ "Si loquamur de poena pro peccato inflicta, in quantum habet rationem poenae, sic solum unusquisque pro peccato suo punitur." *Ibid.*, a. 8. Cf. also Chapter Three, section on Headship of Christ and solidarity.

¹⁸ As will be mentioned in the evaluation to follow, this is one of the principal difficulties to be encountered by proponents of the theory of penal expiation. *Note*: The objection that Christ, by reason of His having given a perfect satisfaction, should have thereby suffered the full punishment, namely, eternal death, proceeds from conceiving satisfaction as merely penal and material. The value comes from Christ's theandric act of love: "Insuper ipsa voluntaria mors temporalis Christi erat valoris infiniti, prout per eam offerebat Deo vitam Verbi Incarnati." Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, p. 419, objection 5. *18* *Prat.*, *op. cit.*, II, p. 196. Cf. also Gallier, *op. cit.*, p. 388. Ferraristis makes the following distinction: "Advertendum . . . quod differt punitio peccati a satisfactione: quia in punitioe quis poenam sustinet contra suam voluntatem omnino; in satisfactione vero quia sustinet poenam aliquo modo voluntarie." *Cont. Gent.*, IV, c. 55, ad 20 (XIII).

but quite necessary. To suffer a penalty (or to pay a debt) is not to sustain a punishment as such; the former does not of necessity involve guilt, while the latter always presupposes it.¹⁹ For this reason the Angelic Doctor, as in the citation below, makes an almost constant use of the term to carry (*portare*), when he speaks of one accepting a punishment (in the sense explained above) on behalf of another—so that the punishment cannot be conceived as being transferred or deserved by one other than the guilty person for whose offense the punishment is being sustained.

Et quia contingit eos, qui differunt in reatu poenae, esse unum secundum voluntatem unione amoris, inde est quod interdum aliquis qui non peccavit, poenam voluntarius pro alio portat. . . .²⁰

Christ, therefore, Himself innocent and indeed impeccable, did not and could not merit or undergo a punishment; He did, however, in His vicarious satisfaction, suffer a penalty, freely and out of love for all mankind. Both suffering and death were the penalties of sin, and these Christ took upon Himself, but not the sin, and without sin, one cannot be said to suffer a punishment as such.²¹

3. Objections—God's mercy and justice.

In the foregoing responses to the principal objections concerning the nature of Christ's satisfaction, it was demonstrated that Christ, in His atonement for the sins of mankind, did not Himself become a sinner or incur the guilt of sin, nor did He undergo a punishment in the accepted sense of that term. The true nature of a valid vicarious satisfaction (as explained in the preceding chapters) does not require—nor is it possible—that both sin and its punishment, the *causa* of Christ's satisfaction, be transferred or assumed in such a manner so that they become directly personal.

The final series of objections proceeds from the apparent contra-

¹⁹ In response to the objection that punishment is sometimes inflicted apart from guilt, St. Thomas states: "Christus nullo modo poenam habuit quae esset poena hominis in quantum est homo, quia in bonis rationis superabundavit, nec aliquem defectum passus est. Habuit tamen aliquam, quantum ad naturam culpam; et ideo non oportuit quod esset aliqua culpa in eo; sed quod aliqua culpa praecessisset in natura humana." *H. Scot.*, d. 36, q. un., a. 4, ad 2um.

²⁰ *Summa*, I-II, q. 87, a. 7.

²¹ Related to this series of objections concerning the nature of Christ's vicarious satisfaction is the question that, if His satisfaction is properly efficacious, why do death and the other penalties of sin still remain? *Response*: The death of Christ redeemed mankind from sin and its eternal punishment, i.e., eternal, but not temporal death. By it He also merited for mankind the grace to bear the other penalties of sin in a manner deserving of eternal life. The final and complete restoration of man's nature will be made in the resurrection yet to come. Cf. Billuart, *De Incarnatione*, diss. 19, a. 4; Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, p. 419.

Note: This objection refers perhaps more directly to the effects, rather than to the mode, of Redemption. Cf. *Summa*, III, q. 69, a. 3, ad 3um.

trary, both God's justice and mercy are identical with divine love. They are neither in opposition to, nor exclusive of each other, but exist in a perfect and sublime, although mysterious, harmony.

The infinite mercy of God is such that it always implies an infinite justice; on the other hand, the justice of God not only implies, but is founded upon His infinite mercy. God's boundless mercy, far from being in opposition to His justice, becomes one with it, and indeed surpasses it. That the divine mercy is always presupposed in any work of God's infinite justice, that His mercy is, as it were, the root or principle of all His works is demonstrated by St. Thomas as follows:

Opus autem divinae justitiae semper praesupponit opus misericordiae, et in eo existens, vel praeconsideratum: et rursus, si illud creaturae debetur, hoc erit aliquid quod ex sola bonitate divinae voluntatis dependeat, quae est ultimam radicem eius. . . . Et propter hoc etiam ea quae alicui creaturae debentur, Deus, enim est quod sufficeret ad conservandum ordinem justitiae, quam quod divina bonitas conferit, quae omnium proportionem creaturae excedit.²⁸

Consequently, in all the acts of divine justice whereby God gives to creatures what is necessary for the attainment of their end, what may be due them according to their merit, and whatever the punishment to superabundance of His sin—in all these the mercy of God, out of the His justice. So great is the power of divine mercy that God always bestows upon creatures what is due them more bountifully than is proportionate to their deserts.

Relative to the justice of God in His willing an adequate satisfaction in the sufferings endured by Christ out of love and obedience, how greatly manifested was His own incomprehensible and infinite mercy! For God the Father, "in demanding of Jesus Christ, by reason of His justice, an infinite satisfaction, as the offense was infinite, required of Him the most heroic act of love. And in consigning Him thus for our salvation to the glorious ignominy of death on the Cross, He showed His own infinite love for the sovereign Good, for Christ, and for us."²⁹

The infinite justice and mercy of God, therefore, were harmoniously united, reconciled, and given a most perfect expression in the great

mercy pertains directly to the consideration of the nature of God. (See Garrigou-Lagrange, *ibid.*, pp. 108ff., 239-241, 392-394). Here, however, the divine attributes are discussed only in their relation to the satisfaction given by Christ in the Redemption.

²⁸ *Summa*, I, q. 21, a. 4.

²⁹ Garrigou-Lagrange, *God: His Existence and His Nature*, II, p. 240. Also quoted here are the words of the Psalmist: "Mercy and truth have met each other: justice and peace have kissed." (Ps. 84:11).

act of love manifested by Christ in His own sufferings and death, wherein He offered an infinite satisfaction to His Heavenly Father on behalf of all mankind. God, despite the infinite offense of sin, wholly from the depths of His own goodness did not cease to love mankind, but moved by mercy, gave them a most efficacious means of repairing the injury without their suffering the punishment demanded by His justice. In other words, for God to give a Redeemer to the human race was by far a greater act of mercy than if He had forgiven sin without exacting a rigorous satisfaction, which He could well have done, had He so willed, without injury to His justice.³⁰ The Angelic Doctor, in his explanation of the manner in which God handed over Christ to His death, refers to the *severitas* (justice) and *bonitas* (mercy) of God as follows:

In quo ostenditur et Dei severitas, qui peccatum sine poena dimittere nolit, quod significat Apostolus dicens, "Proprio Filio non peperit," et bonitas ejus, in eo quod, cum homo sufficienter satisfacere non posset per aliquam poenam quam pateretur, ei satisfactorem dedit, quod significavit Apostolus dicens, "pro nobis omnibus tradidit illum."³¹

So too does it follow that, in virtue of the divine mercy and goodness which His justice in the exaction of an adequate reparation presupposed, the Redemption was in itself wholly gratuitous on the part of God towards mankind. That man could merit his own redemption by giving to God an adequate reparation for the offense inflicted by sin was utterly impossible. The *gratia* justification of mankind referred to by the Apostle can and must be attributed only to the merciful goodness of God who Himself willed the Redemption of man, not through a mere condonation of sin, or through the acceptance of an imperfect personal satisfaction, but through the very Passion and Death of His only-begotten Son. The gratuity of man's Redemption then was two-fold: God willed to accept a satisfaction given by one other than the actual offender,³² and secondly, He gave

³⁰ God, since He is the Supreme Lawmaker, can both withhold the penalty and forgive the offense, and if He so acts, He is then said to act mercifully, His justice remaining unimpaired. Cf. Billuart, *De Incarnatione*, diss. 19, a. 4.

³¹ *Summa*, III, q. 47, a. 3, ad 1um.

³² That the acceptance of Christ's satisfaction was an act of mercy in regard to mankind follows from the equality demanded in the reparation of an injury. This is not a material equality so that given, e.g. the full payment of a tangible or external debt, the element of gratuity cannot apply. On the contrary, the equality in reparation is between person and person; consequently, as the injury affects the person offended, so does the obligation of satisfying, belong to, or affect, the person offending. The one injured, therefore, can justly refuse to accept a satisfaction offered by one other than the actual offender. Wherefore it is concluded that men were justified *gratis*.

Note: The accepted satisfaction of Christ, however, remained on the part of God an act of strict justice in regard to Christ Himself who satisfied in *rigore justitiae*. Cf. Billuart, *De Incarnatione*, diss. 19, a. 4.

to mankind His Divine Son through whom the atonement would be effected. Wherefore, in the words of the Angelic Doctor:

Dicendum quod hominem liberari per passionem Christi, conveniens fuit et misericordiae et justitiae ejus. Justitiae quidem, quia per passionem suam Christus satisfecit pro peccato humani generis: et ita homo per justitiam Christi liberatus est. Misericordiae vero, quia, cum homo per se satisfacere non posset pro peccato totius humanae naturae. . . Deus et satisfactorem dedit Filium suum: secundum illud Rom. 3. (24-25): "Justificati gratis per gratiam ipsius, per redemptionem quae est in Christo Jesu, quem proposuit Deus propitiorem per fidem ipsius." Et hoc fuit abundantioris misericordiae quam si peccata absque satisfactione dimisisset.³³

In light of the above objections and responses, it should be evident that there is in the Thomistic concept of vicarious satisfaction nothing repugnant in itself or contradictorily opposed to reason—even though above it. The exigencies of vicarious satisfaction do not demand or imply that God thereby approves and accepts a mere penal substitution; nor does it indicate that God withholds His infinite mercy and acts only as a severe vindictive Judge; nor does it by any means contradict the dogma of the gratuity of justification. On the contrary, God's mercy in the Redemption is emphasized beyond measure, for out of love He gave His own Son to do what men could not do, and His justice, meanwhile, remained unimpaired.

What is the sublimity of the Cross, if not the harmony of perfections seemingly in opposition, the union of the supreme demands of justice and love?³⁴

³³ *Summa*, III, q. 46, a. 1, ad 3um.

³⁴ Garrigou-Lagrangé, *God: His Existence and His Nature*, II p. 240.

CHAPTER FIVE

EVALUATION

1. Recapitulation and the moral and penal aspects of satisfaction.

Inasmuch as the principal aim of this treatise was to present an analytical demonstration for but one of the four chief aspects of the dogma of the Redemption, namely, that of its mode of vicarious satisfaction as proposed by St. Thomas in q. 48, a. 2, part III of the *Summa*, the evaluation to be given herewith will be limited to a criticism of this one particular mode and the elements involved. In order to avoid any undue repetition of what has already been sufficiently demonstrated in the analysis proper, this evaluation will include a brief recapitulation, a statement of the two divergent views of theologians concerning the relative importance of the moral and penal aspects of satisfaction, and finally, an analysis of the position of St. Thomas in regard to both.

In the analysis of sin considered as the cause for satisfaction, it was seen that the offense given God by sin implied a two-fold violation: a violation of the honor due God as Creator and Lord of the universe, and a violation of the moral order as established and upheld by God. As a result of his sin, therefore, man had contracted a two-fold debt or guilt consequent upon the offense, namely, *reatus culpae* and *reatus poenae*; wherefore, he was held to a strict compensation towards God for both the offense given and the punishment incurred. In accordance with divine justice, man was now obliged to repair the injury and to suffer the penalty due to his sin—in a word, he was held to make satisfaction. The form or mode of this satisfaction was then seen to comprise the necessary elements of an absolute voluntariness on the part of the one desiring to satisfy, and his suffering of the penalty imposed; the former element was said to comprise the formal or moral aspect of the satisfaction due, while the latter was to be considered the material aspect. The act of satisfaction, therefore, was to be both reparatory and moral relative to the offense, expiatory and material relative to the punishment.¹ According to St. Thomas, Christ, in a vicarious manner, offered such a satisfaction to God by a voluntary acceptance of death out of the motives

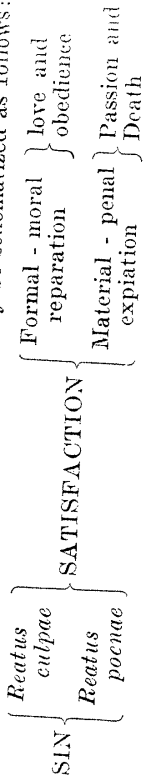
¹ "Voluntarictas est de ratione compensationis offensae. Nam, qui offensus est seu injuriam passus est ex voluntaria honoris debiti denegatione, is non potest compensationem accipere nisi per sui honorationem, quae sit voluntaria.

"Poenae permissio haud minus evidenter est, de ratione compensationis injusmodi. Nam reparatio offensae fit, quatenus offensus exhibetur aliquid, non quod et etiam non offensus deberetur, sed quo compensatur id quod de honore ei debito substractum est."

Galtier, *De Incarnatione Ac Redemptione*, p. 384.

See also Chapter Two of this treatise, definition of satisfaction.

of love and obedience. The various elements involved in both the sin of man and the satisfaction of Christ may be schematized as follows:



The theory of St. Thomas, however, does not enjoy the universal approval of theologians. While the greater number of theologians accept the traditional definition of satisfaction as being essentially a *recompensatio honoris laesi* or a *reparatio injuriae illatae*, not all are in agreement concerning the precise mode in which this reparation was effected by Christ in His vicarious satisfaction. While readily admitting that the satisfaction of Christ does indeed repair the injury inflicted by sin, and that its value depends upon the person who offers the satisfaction, some, nevertheless, have conceived the redemptive work of satisfaction as an acquittal of punishment and thereby would have it consist essentially and primarily in the physical sufferings and death of Christ. Others, on the contrary, would have the moral element predominate in such a way that satisfaction is conceived principally as the reparation of a violated honor, and the death of Christ as a great moral work of submission to the will of God.²

De facto, and apart from the difference in emphasis placed upon these two aspects of satisfaction, Christ in His Passion and Death accomplished both, that is, the penalty was suffered, and hence expiation; the injury was compensated, and hence reparation. As expressed by Janssens:

Redemptionis pretium solvit, cum per caritatem destruxit culpae reatum, et per mortem et supplicia dedit ipse poenae peccati.³

The theories proposed by both schools, consequently, are in themselves but two conceptions of the one, same idea embodied in the reality of the term: satisfaction. In each system it is the Passion that effects salvation. The school in favor of penal expiation (not to be confused with mere penal substitution) would qualify or so express the precise

² Riviere discusses this question as given above in his *Etude Théologique*, p. 221ff. As representative of the school favoring the predominance of the penal aspect, Riviere quotes the following from G. Van Noort: "Proprie dicendum est Deum a Christo innocente opera poenalia exegisse ut pro peccatoribus satisfaceret." (*Tractatus de Deo Redemptore*, 1910, p. 111), Riviere, *ibid.*, p. 222; from P. B. Prevel: "Satisfactio autem principaliter praestatur per voluntariam ad Deum submissionem et ipsius valor aestimatur primario ex dignitate personae satisfactantis." (*Theologiae Dogmaticae, Elementa*, 1912, II, p. 117), Riviere *ibid.*, p. 222. Cf. also *ibid.*, pp. 309ff.

³ Janssens, *De Deo Homine*, II, p. 766.

mode of the satisfactory value of the Passion and Death of Christ by adopting the formula: Christ procured salvation *BY* His suffering (*satisfecit patiendo*); the proponents of the theory of moral reparation prefer to express the concept by stating: Christ procured salvation *IN* His suffering (*satisfecit patiens*).⁴

2. The position of St. Thomas.

The question that now remains to be answered is: Of which opinion is the Angelic Doctor? Did he, in analysing the theological concept of satisfaction, conceive the element of moral reparation to be of the essence of Christ's satisfaction in such a way that its reparatory value was to proceed preeminently from the will, intention, and love of Christ suffering, or primarily from the sufferings and death endured by Him? In light of the preceding analysis of the mode of Christ's satisfaction as proposed by St. Thomas, it is indeed evident that he places the greatest possible emphasis upon the moral element involved in the redemptive work of satisfaction. Although Christ suffered the penalty of death for sin, it is the greatness of the love and obedience out of which He suffered that procures the satisfaction due God. The position of St. Thomas relative to the two schools of thought mentioned above is stated completely and accurately in the following brief analysis of Garrigou-Lagrange.

According to Fr. Lagrange, the theories of the Redemption are four-fold: 1.) Theory of expiation, or substitution, in which particular stress is placed upon the penal aspect of Redemption (*de reatu poenae subeundae*); 2.) Theory of satisfaction, which is presented by St. Thomas in S. T. III, q. 48, a. 2; 3.) Theory of reparation, which emphasizes particularly the will of Christ as most pleasing to God; 4.) Theory of love, in which great stress is placed upon the love of God who so loved the world as to give His own and only Son, and upon the love of Christ who loved and was obedient even to the death of the Cross. Admitting that these are but four aspects of the one Redemption, Fr. Lagrange then indicates that as presented by St. Thomas, all of them are included but in a subordinated position, and as they are given above, in order of ascendancy. This would mean that the penal aspect was of least relative importance, while the motive of love (and obedience) would remain predominant and supreme.⁵ In other words, Christ, suffering the death of the Cross,

⁴ Cf. Riviere, *Etude Théologique*, p. 315. Cf. also *ibid.*, pp. 227-262 for a detailed analysis of the theory of penal expiation; pp. 262-298 for that of moral reparation.

(The comprehensive and scholarly works of Riviere, a recognized authority on the history and theology of the dogma of the Redemption, have proved an invaluable source of information in the composition of the present thesis.)

⁵ Garrigou-Lagrange, *op. cit.*, p. 393. Cited here also are the following references to St. Thomas concerning: the suffering of Christ (*Summa*, III, q. 46, a. 1);

satisfied by giving to God more than was required to compensate for the offense of the whole human race—first and above all, because of the exceeding charity from which He suffered.

The demonstration or proof for this conclusion is to be found in the foregoing analysis of both the Thomistic concept of satisfaction in general, and its particular application to the Passion and Death of the Saviour. The following is a resume of the principal reasons for the Angelic Doctor's conception of the satisfaction of Christ as primarily a work of moral reparation.

It should be recalled, first of all, that in St. Thomas's analysis of the term *satisfaction* the suffering of the penalty is such that, although it admittedly pertains to the *ratio* or essence of satisfaction, it cannot in itself impart to the act that reparatory moral value which constitutes the more important and formal element of satisfaction. To conceive of a satisfactory work as essentially the suffering of a physical penalty does not seem to preserve the integrity of the scholastic concept of a true, moral satisfaction.

Furthermore, since the essential element of sin is to be found in the disruption it causes in the moral order, to expiate the penalty is not properly to repair or to satisfy; it is this moral element involved in sin that demands above all a moral act in order that a valid reparation be effected. The violation of the moral order consequent upon sin is not repaired if and when the penalty imposed is suffered without the free and fully voluntary acceptance on the part of the person who suffers the penalty. In other words, the formal and necessary element of satisfaction does not, and cannot obtain unless the penalty is suffered of one's own free will, together with the express intention that the punishment itself is being sustained for the purpose of repairing, or atoning for, the injury inflicted. Otherwise, the material element alone, or the penal expiation of sin, cannot have the proper moral value necessary in order that the action performed be pleasing and acceptable to God—in a word, satisfactory.⁶ Then, and only then, can it be stated that God exacts satisfaction not as a mere infliction of punishment, but rather because the punishment to be suffered in

the mode of satisfaction (*ibid.*, q. 48, a. 2); the reparation given (*ibid.*, q. 1, a. 2); the theandric love of Christ (*ibid.*, q. 48, a. 2).

Rivière, in reference to the position of St. Thomas, states: "Un récent commentateur de la Somme estime que, dans la satisfaction du Christ, le Docteur Angélique tient pour 'secondaire' le Côté pénal. P. Synave, *Saint Thomas D'Aquin: Vie de Jesus*, t. III, p. 257." *D.T.C.*, "Rédemption," c. 1969.

⁶ Cf. Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 384ff.
 "Satisfactio igitur intelligitur solutio aut potius compensatio utrius que illius debiti. Sed hæc solutio, cum fiat in ordine morali et ad resarciendum ordinem moralem offensæ Dei læsum, nequit esse vera et formalis nisi fiat per voluntarium atque poenæ susceptionem aut acceptationem; ita ut per passionem poenæ habeat tamquam elementum materiale, voluntariam vero illius perpassionis ordinationem ad solutionem debiti habeat tamquam elementum formale." *Ibid.*, p. 384.

satisfying is accepted voluntarily, and will become thereby a recognition of both His justice and the moral order of which He is the Supreme Upholder. Otherwise, it would perhaps appear that sin is to be considered primarily as a punishment to be sustained, rather than as an injury to be repaired; but doesn't the injury inflicted by sin (and the ensuing *reatus culpæ*) precede the punishment which flows rather as a consequence of the offense?

Again, the theory which would give predominance to the penal element involved in satisfaction runs the risk of becoming dangerously exaggerated as already noted, so that Christ may be looked upon as suffering directly and identically the punishment due sin as punishment: death, the divine curse, and even damnation itself. This of course would be an adulteration, but the fact that the theory has been so erroneously conceived as a result tends to discredit it.⁷ Even in its theologically accurate interpretation the difficulty encountered in avoiding the above exaggeration remains. In other words, it may be argued that if Christ suffered primarily to expiate the punishment due sin, and sin in turn merits hell or the punishment of the damned, then Christ should suffer this punishment; otherwise, it is concluded that the expiation is in itself defective or incomplete.⁸ This problem is avoided, however, when the penal aspect is not overemphasized, the while preserving the full value of the Passion and Death itself.

The theory of penal expiation would likewise seem to imply that satisfaction is to be given chiefly on a material basis, that there should exist a material proportionality between the sin and its expiation. Even though Christ suffered and died in payment of the price, He did this not according to the flesh alone, that is, in a wholly and exclusively material manner. According to St. Thomas, satisfaction does not consist in a mere exterior act alone, but rather is the measure of it made in an external manner, and this only according to the equality necessary for repairing the offense (*secundum justitiæ æquivalatam*). Christ suffered, therefore, according to a theandric act of love.⁹

Finally, when reference is made to the necessity of Christ's Passion and Death, it cannot be denied that, considered absolutely (*simpliciter*), and given the fact of God's omnipotence, Redemption could have been accomplished in a way or ways other than that of the ignominious death on the Cross. His passions and crucifixion are concomitant circumstances which testify ultimately to the fitness of the mystery, but not to its absolute exigencies. The idea of expiation,

⁷ Cf. Prat, *op. cit.*, II, p. 198.

⁸ Cf. Rivière, *Étude Théologique*, p. 246.

It is to be noted that this reasoning results from an excessive insistence on the penal aspect of satisfaction to the utter exclusion of the moral. As proposed by Catholic theologians, this is by no means intended.

⁹ Cf. Garrigou-Lagrangé, *op. cit.*, objection 3, p. 419.

therefore, according to the mind of St. Thomas, would constitute the material, but not the formal element of satisfaction.¹⁰

Without losing anything of its penal character, it (the suffering) became moral, both by reason of the freedom which formed its foundation, and of the boundless charity which was its term.¹¹

Galtier states the following:

Quoad formale satisfactionis—doctrina quod hoc sit mortis acceptatio voluntaria, etsi minus solennis et obvia, tamen est etiam communis. Agnoscitur enim ubicunque valor reparativus mortis Christi repetitur ex intentione aut virtute unde procedit.¹²

That Christ did physically suffer a material or corporal punishment is not denied nor undervalued. Stated more directly, the Thomistic concept of the vicarious satisfaction of Christ does not deny that the Redemption was effected principally by His Passion and Death. Insofar as death and suffering were the penalties of Adam's sin, Christ took it upon Himself to suffer and die, to pay the penalties, to satisfy for sin. In the words of St. Thomas himself:

Passus est autem pro nobis ea quae ut nos pateremur ex peccato primi parentis mereremur, quorum praecipuum est mors, ad quam omnes aliae passiones humanae ordinantur sicut ad ultimum. . . . Unde Christus pro peccatis nostris voluit mortem pati, ut dum poenam nobis debitam ipse sine culpa susceperet, nos a reatu mortis liberaret, sicut aliquis debitor poenae liberaretur ab eo pro eo poenam sustinente. Mori etiam voluit, ut non solum mors eius esset nobis satisfactoria, sed etiam salutis Sacramentum. . . .¹³

Or again:

Convenciens fuit Christum mori . . . ad satisfaciendum pro humano genere, quod erat morti adjudicatum propter peccatum. . . . Est autem conveniens satisfaciendi pro alio modus cum aliquis se subiecit poenae quam alius meruit. Et ideo Christus mori voluit, ut, moriendo, pro nobis satisfaceret. . . .¹⁴

¹⁰ Cf. Rivière, *Étude Théologique*, pp. 260-261.

¹¹ "Sans rien perdre de son caractère pénal, elle (la souffrance) devenait morale, et per la liberté qui en était la base, et par la plus grande charité qui en était le terme." *Ibid.*, p. 288.

¹² Galtier, *op. cit.*, p. 393. Cf. also *ibid.*, pp. 395-397, where reference is made to the opinions of Scotus, Bellarmine, Suarez, and Franzelin—all of whom found in the dignity of the God-Man and the love out of which He suffered.

¹³ *Compend. Theol.*, c. 227. Cf. also *Summa*, III, q. 46, a. 1.

¹⁴ In direct reference to the *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas (III, q. 48, a. 2), Galtier states: "Hoc tamen dictum (i.e. 'Ille proprie satisfacit pro offensa qui exhibet offensa id quod aequo vel magis diligit quam odert offensam') noli esse satisfactio quasi in eo denatur ex integro opus satisfactorium, proindeque possit cognosci ut poenosa, de passione scilicet Christi; quam probat habere aliunde vorae satisfactionis ex eo quod in ea sit id ex quo proprie est satisfactio." *Op. cit.*, p. 385, footnote 2.

However, the fact remains that what gives the real satisfactory value to the Passion and Death of Christ is His free and voluntary acceptance of it, His intention to make proper compensation to God for the debt of the human race, His will to make an adequate reparation for the disobedience of mankind by His own obedience even to the death of the Cross. In this interpretation, it cannot be claimed that Christ accepts, in a personal manner, the actual punishment for sin as such, but rather does the emphasis and stress placed upon the moral aspects of satisfaction indicate most assuredly that Christ out of love accepts death not for its own sake, but solely because it has been commanded and decreed by God as a result of sin.

Sic voluntas Dei fuit de morte Christi, in quantum Christus cum ex caritate suscepit et fortiter sustinuit.¹⁵

In satisfactione magis attenditur affectus offerentis quam quantitas obligationis. . . .¹⁶

Whence, in His suffering the penalty of death, the innocent Christ acts wholly out of obedience to God's precept; this obedience in turn proceeds from Christ's love for the glory of God, from His hatred of sin, and from His love of all mankind.

The expiatory suffering of Christ, therefore, is definitely not excluded. In the Thomistic concept, the compensation given by Christ is above all a reparatory homage of obedience and love (which God loved more than He hated the offense), a meritorious act of His own free will, and this is of the essence of Christ's redemptive work of satisfaction.¹⁷ It is in Christ's voluntary acknowledgment and acceptance of God's mandate, and in His full recognition of God's justice, that the punishment suffered out of love receives its full atoning value.¹⁸

He properly satisfies for an offense who offers something which the offended one loves equally, or even more than he detested the offense. But by suffering out of love and obedience, Christ gave more to God than was required to com-

¹⁵ *Cont. Gent.*, IV, c. 55, ad 15.

¹⁶ *Summa*, III, q. 79, a. 5.

¹⁷ Cf. Rivière, *Étude Théologique*, p. 295.

As expressed by Prat: "Jesus Christ is always the victim, whose blood expiates sin, effects propitiation, seals the covenant, and opens heaven; but he is no longer an inert victim cloved with a kind of magic virtue; his blood, however precious it may be, is valid only through the free and loving offering which he makes of it to His Father in the name of the humanity contained in him as its Head. . . . It is no longer a question of . . . as external satisfaction given to God in order to extort from him the pardon of criminals, but of a filial homage which, thanks to Jesus Christ, the human race pays of itself, and which God accepts because he initiated it and has the principal part in it." *Op. cit.*, II, p. 213.

¹⁸ "La souffrance n'est qu'un élément de fait, dont la valeur est subordonnée à l'amour dont elle est l'occasion ou le fruit." Rivière, *D.T.C.*, "Rédemption," c. 1872.

pensate for the offense of the whole human race. First of all, because of the exceeding charity from which He suffered; secondly, on account of the dignity of His life which He laid down in satisfaction, for it was the life of one who was God and Man; thirdly, on account of the extent of the Passion, and the greatness of the grief endured. . . .¹⁹

¹⁹ *Summa*, III, q. 48, a. 2.

CONCLUSION

The doctrine of the vicarious satisfaction of Christ, whether it be accepted as an expression of but one aspect or mode of the Redemption as analysed in the present treatise, or whether it be considered as a concept synonymous with the revealed truth itself, must, at least for the present, remain but the excellent fruit of speculative theology. However, despite the absence of a formal ecclesiastical definition, the Church, nevertheless, has given sufficient indication that it will not content itself with expressions of so great a mystery that are lacking in accuracy and precision. That the doctrinal synthesis of the Redemption as presented by St. Thomas provides both a scientific and deeply religious expression of a truth which is itself a mystery, is evident from the preceding analysis of the Redemption *per modum satisfactionis*, itself the essence of the mystery.

In his critical exposition of the Angelic Doctor's concept of vicarious satisfaction, Riviere, the recognized historian and theologian of the Redemption, pays him the following tribute:

St. Thomas saw clearly that the Passion, though it was a penalty, and the penalty of our sins, was more particularly a grand act of obedience and love. This was why he took care not to make satisfaction consist in a mere penitential verdict, but followed Anselm's lead in making it a work of a high moral order.

. . . St. Thomas avoids any exaggeration; he admits the great fitness of the Passion, though he does not state it to be necessary; he maintains the objectivity and the superabundance of the Atonement, though he does not allow this to interfere with our own twofold collaboration. Possibly his wise reserve may be the reason why certain historians consider his doctrine to lack order and stability. . . . As for us, our preference is for St. Thomas and for his delicate sense of shades and distinctions, which after all is merely the art of rendering aright the complexity of reality.¹

¹ Riviere, *The Doctrine of the Atonement*, (Trans: Luigi Cappadelta), II, p. 104-105.

² Firmiter credendum est quod Jesus est Salvator et Redemptor secundum proprium sensum verborum absque ulla attenuatione, imo realitas divina hujusce mysterii valde superat conceptiones nostras, id est: Christus adhuc multo profundius et altius Redemptor est quam putamus dum ei satisfactionem vere et proprie dictam tribuimus. In hoc, non solum theologia non exagerrat, sed non potest satis exprimere excellentem realitatem hujusce mysterii. Plus est in Deo et in Christo quam in tota nostra theologia. (Garrigon-Lagrangue, *op. cit.*, p. 421.)

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Note: "Igitur questiones istas triginta tres (a q. 27 ad 59) de mysteris vitae

Christi haud exposuerunt Ioannes A. S. Thoma I.-B. Gonet, Salmanticensis: ne

illi quidem qui olim vel etiam recentius specialitem tractatum de Incarnatione

reliquerunt." (Vosté, *op. cit.*, p. v).