

EDITORIAL

'I have yet many things to say to you: but you cannot bear them now. But when he, the spirit of truth, is come, he will teach you all truth.' (JOHN 16, 12.)

THESE words of our Lord were spoken to his Apostles, and for them they had a twofold application. As Apostles they were the foundations of the Church of which Jesus Christ was the chief corner-stone, and in virtue of their apostleship they and their successors were set to rule the Church of God, to be the authoritative instruments of her proclamation of the gospel; in this capacity the Holy Spirit would guide them and protect them from falling into error. But the words were addressed also to the Apostles and their successors in another capacity, as individual members of the Church, Christ's mystical Body, subject to the obedience of faith and recipients of the redeeming power of the grace it mediates to men. Even the Pope, we do well to recall, though he is empowered by his supreme authority to define what belongs to God's revelation and what does not, must yet go to confession like other men. So our Lord's promise to the Apostles that the Holy Spirit when he should come would lead them into all truth was made as much to each of us individually as it was to the Church as a whole. The promise to the Church as a whole was for the sake of its members as *persons*.

This is clearly brought out in some other words of our Lord which seem to complement those we have already quoted. *If you continue in my word, you shall be my disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.* (John 8, 31.) The Holy Spirit has come to us as he came to the Apostles. He came to us in our baptism, in our confirmation. He comes to us repeatedly in our confessions and our communions; he came to us to give us perpetual support in the responsibilities of our state of life, whether it be marriage or the priesthood. Against this background we live our life of prayer; through prayer and sacrament he brings us the power of Christ's redemption, increasing and deepening in us the life of sanctifying grace in its expressions of Faith, Hope and Charity perfected by his action upon us through

the gifts: Wisdom, Knowledge, Understanding, Fortitude and the rest. Yet there is a constant danger that in living our lives in fulfilment of the vocation God has given us, whatever it may be, a gap will appear between our life of prayer and our life of action. This happens because the mind is working independently of the rest of our personality; the will, that is, is not fully geared into the mind, and the emotions, the affective side of our human nature, are not under control of the will but sometimes control it. An integral person is one in whom mind, will and emotions are united into a properly ordered whole. That integrity was broken by original sin; no one is fully integral this side of the vision of God. Quite true, but grace can restore this integrity, it is the goal towards which we strive; the Christian life is the way to the Beatific vision.

Meanwhile we can all of us see this absence of integration in ourselves. The chief sign of it is the amount of truth to which we give a *notional* assent only. The mind says: Yes, I believe it, I hold it; but there is little or no response in the will to make this truth something we really live. Our emotions and passions tend to bias the will heavily against making this response, and so there is a gap between our knowledge of God and our love of him expressed in the doing of his will. Our life of prayer tends to become disconnected from our life of action and to that extent emptied of meaning.

How can this potential gap be prevented, or how, if it exists, can it be closed? We often lay the blame for it upon the difficulties and the temptations life presents us with, but the fundamental cause does not lie in these, it lies in ourselves. The Holy Spirit is seeking to lead us into all truth; and the difficulties of life are only solved by learning the truth about them, the full supernatural truth which enables us to see them as they are in God's eyes. But we are putting obstacles in the way of our learning this truth because we are not prepared wholeheartedly to *continue* in Christ's word in order to be indeed his disciples. He has said that this is a pre-requisite to learning the truth so that the truth may make us free.

To continue in his word. In the Mass, daily or weekly according to our opportunity, we are confronted by the mystery of redemption, what our Lord has done, is doing, and will do for us by the power of his Spirit in the life of his Mystical Body. Unless we

are constantly confronting this mystery and by our humble and grateful acceptance of it learning its meaning we face life and its difficulties in our own strength and not in the power of the Spirit. We then lack the power to solve them by a deeper insight into God's will resulting from an increased penetration into the truth by which alone we are made free. Our life of prayer, with the Mass at its centre, is fundamental and must be the constant object of our striving and self-discipline. The more deeply we penetrate the mystery of redemption, continuing in his word, the more clearly we shall be taught how to deal with our difficulties. We shall be taught by the charity of God poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given us. (Rom. 5, 5.)

Through our life of prayer then we continue in Christ's word; and that continuing, as we know, must be a daily dying to self, a daily crucifixion with Christ, a daily rising again with him to a new life. Only so can the obstacles of self-pleasing be removed which hinder the Holy Spirit's work, the work of leading us to see the truth in human situations and relationships as God sees it, enabling us thus to enter deeply into his truth, the truth that leads to the freedom of the vision of God.

The connecting thread that runs through the articles in this number of *THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT* is the transformation of knowledge into holiness by the power of the Spirit. It will be seen exemplified in a penetrating study of this process in the life of St Thomas Aquinas, philosopher and theologian. At another level altogether, it is illustrated in the problem of the education of the adolescent; how to ensure, as far as human planning can ensure such things, that the whole of education, religious and secular, plays its part in opening up the way to God and so effecting this transformation, which is also the foundation of our life-long need to learn to live in God's presence, to realize his providential care of us, and to understand how all things work together unto good to them that love him. The making of a mime may at first sight appear quite alien to our theme till it is realized what a part can be played here by this dramatic form in the passage of the truths of faith from notional to real and vital apprehension. Finally, in the sermon on Newman's singleness of purpose we see set out the struggle, in the life of this great and good man, to achieve the fusion of knowledge and holiness

Now this is eternal life: that they may know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. (John 17, 3.)

* * *

We wish to tender to Père Michalon, our most sincere apologies for a mistake in the printing of the translation of his pamphlet "The Week of Universal Prayer for Christian Unity" in the January number of *THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT*. It was considered by the authorities concerned, in view of the situation in England where Christian disunity is exemplified by so many differing allegiances, and where much misunderstanding exists, that it would be advisable to add to the first paragraph of this pamphlet an editorial note making clear the position of the Catholic Church in regard to its teaching authority. Accordingly the following sentence was inserted in the margin of the typescript. 'As a result of these divisions the voice of the supreme teaching authority of the one, true Church, the Catholic Church, is often lost or obscured to the outsider by a chorus of other discordant voices, each claiming to speak in Christ's name.' Unfortunately the insertion of this sentence as a footnote was never indicated and the printer placed it in the text. This was overlooked in proof correction and it appeared as an integral part of Père Michalon's pamphlet without any indication of its real nature. We are very sorry indeed for the carelessness of this error and tender our regret to Père Michalon for the discourtesy to him it has involved.

Our Anglican and Free Church brethren will not we feel sure read any lack of charity into the words of this intended footnote. They are as much concerned in what it says as ourselves. It is a fact that the Catholic Church makes the claim there expressed, and no ecumenical work can be fruitful if the fact is not clearly realized. But, though Catholics are deeply convinced that the Catholic Church alone possesses and proclaims the fullness of God's revelation, we must also realise how great can be the imperfections in the way we apprehend it, the handicaps of thought and language in the way we express it, and above all the deficiencies, due to our sins, in the way we live it. All these can and do contribute greatly to the maintenance of the barriers that divide Christendom. Moreover, it is also a fact, as Père

Michalon himself emphasizes in the words of his pamphlet which succeed this sentence, that to the outsider, the unbeliever, the voice of the Catholic Church is only one of many discordant voices each claiming to speak in Christ's name. The consequence of this is, as he most truly says, concern, uncertainty and confusion of non-believers in both pagan and so-called Christian countries, and anguish for those who seek the truth.



KNOWLEDGE AND HOLINESS AND ST THOMAS AQUINAS*

THOMAS DEMAN, O.P.

IN the case of the majority of saints, sanctity and knowledge seem to be two different things. Our admiration goes to the heroic penances they have imposed upon themselves, the uncompromising apostolate they have carried out, the outpourings of love which have been their heart's expression or the martyrdom which has crowned their life. As a general rule, we do not realize that intellectual excellence may have a connection with the merits which raise a Christian to the altars. The interest of the case of St Thomas Aquinas is that in him we are compelled to investigate this problem. That the Church solemnly canonized him less than fifty years after his death is a fact, as is also the circumstance that his life was given in a remarkable degree to the work of the mind. It was spent in intellectual activity as exclusive and intense as one could wish. St Thomas taught and lectured, wrote books, took part in learned disputations—and we honour him as a very great saint. It would indeed be strange if we were to seek the explanation of his sanctity in traits which are edifying indeed, but alien to the real substance of his life. Yet the habit of separating the intellectual from the spiritual life is so strongly-rooted that the biographers of St Thomas often proceed in this way. To read them one would suppose that the subject of their biography sanctified himself in the brief moments of respite in which he ceased to act as a theologian. We cannot

*Translation of an article in *La Vie Spirituelle*, March 1945, by Kathleen Pond.