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IN THE reception of the Sacrament of Baptism Holy Mother, the Church, demands that the one being baptized assume the name of one of those glorious heroes or heroines of Christ who are listed in the catalogue of the saints. She does this so that being regenerated by the "saving waters" we may have for a name-sake one upon whom we may model our lives and to whom we may have recourse as our intercessor before the Heavenly Throne.

When His Holiness Pope Leo XIII, of saintly memory, ascended the throne of the Fisherman, Christian Education received a spiritual re-birth. In the second year of his reign Pope Leo issued the immortal Encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, in which he exhorted Christian scholars to return to, and to hold fast to the sound doctrine of Saint Thomas Aquinas. One year later, 1880, he constituted the Angelic Doctor the Patron of all Catholic Schools. This year 1945, marks the sixty-fifth Anniversary of this institution.

That the Holy Father chose as a patron for his schools the learned Dominican saint was no mere accident. Saint Thomas could supply that which the Church needed, having incorporated in his works, in a marvelous synthesis, the priceless heritage of Christian doctrine and pagan learning. The Thomistic edifice alone could give the firmness and stability needed to meet the onslaughts of the modern scholars.

Positing the cause of the evils of the day, Pope Leo said that: "evil teaching about things human and divine, has come forth from

the schools of the philosophers."¹ These poisonous doctrines were filtering through the fabric of society and not only were threatening to consume that which it proposed to regenerate, but also were snatching from men their future blessedness that was purchased by the Son of God. As a remedy for this condition the Vicar of Christ instructed that all were to teach "a doctrine more in unison with the perpetual teaching office of the Church, such as is contained in the volumes of Thomas Aquinas."²

In response to this instruction, Catholic teachers with praiseworthy zeal and in a spirit of deep filial obedience began a more intensive study of the works of the Angelic Doctor. Throughout the whole of Christendom the intellectual activity characteristic of a virile Catholicism was renewed. Many countries saw arise within their borders new institutions of higher studies that were to proclaim with the greatest fervor the eternal philosophy of Aquinas. Yet, amidst this glorious revival there were those who, contrary to the wishes of the Holy Father, departed from the classical commentators on Saint Thomas. In so doing, they created a break in the Thomistic tradition that even today remains a threat to those of the Faith.

During this anniversary year it is the obligation of all Catholics, especially of those engaged in the work of Christian Education, to unite in giving thanks that His Holiness Pope Leo XIII, in his paternal solicitude, has given us the Angelic Doctor as a patron. It should be a year of re-dedication to the furtherance of Thomistic doctrine.

It is evident that those who have gone before have employed to great advantage the keen-edged sword of truth forged by Aquinas. Yet, the battle is by no means over. The ultimate victory of truth is yet to be accomplished. There remains the exhausting work of keen penetration to the very roots of the modern errors. A theologism masquerading as a philosophy has, from the time of the Reformation, been gnawing away the Faith. The bridge of Faith that connects man with God has been broken. A vital Thomism can prepare the way for a fusion of the break.

Evil teaching is still coming from the schools of the philosophers. Will Thomism meet the challenge?

¹ *Aeterni Patris*—Leo XIII.

² *ibid.*