

Bibliography for Further Study

With the increasing number of Marian books, careful selection becomes more difficult. To facilitate any further study on any particular phase of Marian theology, we recommend the following. These books contain excellent bibliographies.

1. *Mother of the Redeemer*. Edited by Kevin McNamara. Sheed & Ward. New York. 1960 pp. 258. (We highly recommend this book both for its presentation and rich bibliographies).
2. *The Mystery of Mary*. By R. Bernard, O.P. Herder, St. Louis. 1960 pp. 304. (This deals with Mary's Spiritual Maternity).
3. *Complete Mariology*. By C. Friethoff, O.P. Blackfriars. London. 1959.
4. *Mariology*. Edited by J. B. Carol, O.F.M. Bruce. Milwaukee. 1957. (Only the first two volumes have been published. Vol. 3 is in preparation. This is *the* monumental work of Marian Studies in English).

—Angelo H. Camacho, O.P.

¹ "Since the objects of Mariology are the same as those of Theology, it would be much better to give this tract the title of Marian Theology. For the name, Mariology, is misleading, inasmuch as it seems to imply an independent science with distinct objects. Its use is permissible only if its relation to Theology as part to whole is always kept in mind." *The Unitive Principle of Marian Theology*. By Paul Mahoney, O.P. The Thomist. Vol. XVIII, No. 4. pp. 450-51.

² St. Thomas. I Sentences. Ques. 1, prolog., a. 4.

THE EUCHARIST AND THE CHRISTMAS LITURGY

FOR THE PAST FEW WEEKS the country has undergone a transformation. Gay lights of Christmas trees, decorations in our large department stores, singing of carols in the streets and an air of happiness are the calling cards of change. Ordinarily somber and dull looking scenes are transformed into places of joy, brightness and excitement. The drabness and routine, the darkness and cold of winter vibrate with the anticipation of a great day. In the commercial world it is a time of increased sales. Stores and shops overflow with customers buying gifts for friends and family. This giving and receiving of gifts

is the hallmark of the American Christmas. Now is the time of year when all selfishness disappears, or is at least hidden for awhile under the generosity of this mutual exchange. Now is the time when light comes into the darkness of winter.

All of us remember the childhood thrill and excitement we felt when we went on Christmas morning to open our presents. We can recall the gratitude felt and expressed to our parents for their gifts. Yet behind the material exchange of presents, there is something more. For Christmas, the holiest night of the year, is characterized by an everlasting gift; we cannot disassociate ourselves and our giving from that most tremendous Gift of God's own Son.

Concerning the giving of gifts it is often said that what matters is not what we receive, but from whom it comes and with what spirit it is given. We are not ordinarily inclined to exchange gifts with someone with whom we have no ties of blood or friendship. For in all our giving there must be love; love is the motivation of our generosity.

Love is a word of various connotations. It has been applied to sentiment, to benevolence, to humanitarianism, to emotion; the meaning is complex. Perhaps if we see love in respect to the nature of man, some of the complexity will vanish. When man knows that particular things are good for him, or appear so, he naturally desires them. Love is the complacency and joy of possessing things which are good. When man knows of God and His goodness, he naturally desires God. But God has not only let man know Him, He has even given man the unspeakable gift of loving Him with a share of His own divine Love. This mysterious gift, of course, is grace. At creation, God imparted it to Adam; at the Fall of man by original sin, man forfeited the gift.

The restoration of this gift of divine love is the reason for Christmas. The Son of God was born a Redeemer to restore man to God and, through grace, to give divine Love back to man. In the terse phrase of St. John, "God is Love."

Christmas is the manifestation of that Love, first to the shepherds, then to the Magi, and later to the Jews. Yet was this mission of love and redemption to be restricted to a small group of shepherds, of curious travelers, of Palestinian fishermen? No, not at all; for this wonder of the nativity of the God-Man was extended to our own times by means of the Blessed Eucharist.

The lover seeks to unite himself with what he loves; he actually gives himself to his beloved. In the economy of Divine Wisdom, we have God

giving Himself to man—the ultimate reaches of divine generosity. The Eucharist is not surpassed by any other gift. It was the God-Man Who gave us the Food whereby we might be forever united to Him. It was the means He established to make the Incarnation a lasting testimony of His Love for us:

The man who eats my flesh and drinks my blood enjoys eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. He lives continuously in me, and I in him. . . . He who eats me will live, in his turn, because of me." (*John* 6:55-58).

"The more skillful a sculptor," we read in the Angelic Doctor, "the more subtle and delicate the work that he executes." Clearly this is true of the divine Gift of the Eucharist. Our eyes see the ordinary elements of bread and wine. At the word of Christ through the priest, these palpable things are transformed—transubstantiated—into the Body and Blood of Christ.

It would seem that in giving this great gift, the divine purpose willed that love was to shine through and surpass the other perfections of God. The divine power, majesty, and simplicity all seem to bow to love. The Creator of all things deemed it expedient to send us His Son clothed in our own flesh and blood. It is true that in the Eucharist we do not see Christ in the crib nor experience the wonder of the miraculous manifestations which greeted Him on the night of His birth. But we have more. On earth His humanity was visible; in the Eucharist we daily receive His divinity as well.

Reflect on the words of the prophet *Isaias*:

So many thirst, who will not come to get the water? So many destitute, who will come and get food, wine and milk free, no price to be paid?

In the sacramental food of the Eucharist, all the analogies for the sustaining of life in the natural order are exemplified. The words of Our Lord concerning the need for this sacramental food apply to all men who hunger and thirst for the nourishment which sustains the life of grace. All men need this gift which cannot be bought at any price. The recent writings of the Holy Fathers have done much to bring this to our attention.

The call for more frequent reception, the mitigation of the Eucharistic fast, seem to indicate that we must arrive at intimate union with Christ by means of the Eucharistic table. Christ is waiting to give us the gift of Himself—to be born within us. This Eucharistic birth within the faithful is the sign of Christ's redemptive efficacy, for it is, as St. Thomas says, "the pledge of eternal life."

The Secret Prayer for the Aurora Mass of Christmas set in relief these

two Christmas mysteries of the Nativity and the Eucharistic dwelling within men:

May our offerings, O Lord, we beseech You, be in keeping with the mystery of Your nativity, and may they ever bring us peace: that even as He, though made man, showed Himself also God, so too these fruits of the earth may bestow on us what is divine.

Implicit in these words lies the comparison: "We believe the Godhead dwells among us in our own flesh and blood, Divine Father; in that same faith may we cherish and enjoy always that Incarnate Divine Son Whose birth on earth is perpetuated in these mysteries of the sacrament of His Body and Blood."

There is no doubt that a Christmas without Holy Communion is incomplete. But even the reception of the Eucharist on the Feast of Christ's Nativity will lack full appreciation of the mystery unless the redemptive purpose of Christ's birth is understood and loved in relation to the order of divine grace. The redemption restored us to the supernatural order of grace whose goal is eternal happiness in loving union with God. But God's love, as it were, outdid itself; the union of divine Lover and beloved creatures was never again to be broken. Its perpetuation was effected in the Eucharist.

At the second Mass of Christmas day the faithful go to receive the newborn Redeemer with these words of the *Communion Verse* on their lips—a perfect greeting to the God-Man to be born sacramentally within them—:

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion, shout for joy . . . behold
your king comes, the holy one, and the Saviour of the world.

—Anselm M. Egan, O.P.

JOHN OF PARIS, ST. THOMAS AND THE MODERN STATE

An Exercise in Applied Thomism

Part II

THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT of the numerous and striking modern elements to be found in John Quidort's early fourteenth-century political tract *Kingly Power and Papal Power (De potestate regia et papali)*. W. H. V. Reade in the chapter he contributed to the sixth volume of