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*GRATIA GRATIS DATA: A THOMISTIC PERSPECTIVE
OF GRACE IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH*

by

Sister Mary Josephine Spellman, O.P.

Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

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INTRODUCTION

The bandages were removed from the body of the afflicted man that covered the site of infection. The procedure, which seemed hopeless, was the doctors' last resort to restore the man to health. Failure seemed to point only to death. Friends of the man stood quietly together in another room, praying that God would answer their pleas for the suffering man. The site was exposed and the surgeon, with a scalpel in one hand and palpating for the infected place with the other, searched and probed repeatedly for the wound. Puzzled, the surgeon continued his search, exhausting every means of medical examination he knew. However, he could find nothing. To his wonder and amazement, the tissue that had been engrossed with disease and infection was completely healed. Upon hearing this wondrous news, those present to await what seemed would be a dreadful outcome burst into tears of boundless joy and relief. Cries of gladness and praise were on all the lips of those present to the God of mercy and of power. It was "a scene too much for any pen to tell."¹

¹ Augustine of Hippo. *City of God* (Trans. by Daniel J. Honan, and Gerald Groveland Walsh; Vol. 24 of *The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation*; Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1964). 437.

St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430 A.D.) recounts in *City of God* the miraculous healing of Innocent, a man who had formerly worked for the deputy prefect in the city of Carthage in about 400 A.D.² Being a deeply devoted man to his Christian faith, Innocent gravely suffered from a bodily condition that was further complicated by a procedure intended to mitigate it. However, when matters rose from complex to critical, Innocent was advised by a physician to undergo another operation. But because of his extreme agony during the first procedure, Innocent was convinced that the second operation would result only in his death, and so in great fear and anguish, both he and his friends implored Heaven to grant a miraculous healing. Innocent was not disappointed, and the wonder and awe of the event did not escape the ponderings of St. Augustine – who was present at the time – who was compelled to record it in his writings.

But this miracle precedes another miraculous occurrence more peculiar than the first. This time, it regarded a woman from the same city, who was suffering from breast cancer that was likely to claim her life. Her physicians reported that all treatment was hopeless; nothing could be done to procure her healing. But being a woman of faith, she resorted to prayer and begged God for his help. The answer to her petition came in the form of a dream, where she was advised to attend the Easter Vigil. There, she was to wait near the baptistery for the first neophyte to come forth from the baptismal waters and request that the sign of the cross be made over her. When the woman awoke, she followed all the prescriptions of her dream. Upon the sign of the cross being traced over the place of her malady, the woman at once felt in her body that she was cured.³

² Augustine, *City of God*, 433.

³ Augustine, *City of God*, 437-438.

When this news reached the ears of St. Augustine, he was convinced that the event ought to have received public recognition and proceeded to administer “an emphatic protest” when he found that this was not the case. In fact, when he discovered that he – along with others – had not been made aware or heard of what happened, he was “positively angry.”⁴ When the cured woman obdurately denied her omission, St. Augustine inquired from her closest friends – who confessed that they had not heard of the affair – as to whether they had known about her miraculous healing. In retribution, St. Augustine made the woman “retell it in every detail just as it happened, while her friends, who were there, listened in immense amazement and, when she was done, glorified God.”⁵

St. Augustine’s fervor in conveying this story seems to point to a fundamental truth: that honor and glory be given to God when he carries out marvelous deeds. But why did St. Augustine insist that a miraculous occurrence be made public? Why was his entreaty so urgent? Rather than presuming St. Augustine’s appeal as over-zealous, we can instead look to how he may have sought to surface perhaps a mysterious reality: that signs and wondrous deeds were *still* occurring in the Church.

“The God who works the miracles we read of in Scripture,” Augustine writes, “uses any means and manner He chooses.”⁶ Saint Augustine’s account of the woman’s healing points to a deeper truth: God can and often uses *others* to bring about his glorious achievements. God certainly does not have need of us, but the evidence of the ways that he works through us for the sake of others cannot be denied. This evidently signals a certain grace at work.

⁴ Augustine, *City of God*, 438.

⁵ Augustine, *City of God*, 438.

⁶ Augustine, *City of God*, 447.

These works of grace, which St. Paul deemed as the *charismatōn*, are given to one for the sake of others. St. Paul's writings on the *charismatōn* supplied context for which St. Thomas Aquinas furnished a theological analysis. Subsequently, the writings of St. Thomas established solid groundwork to which the teachings of the Second Vatican Council in the twentieth century later appealed. But St. Thomas's exposition was by no means the first time these gifts of grace received recognition. The Early Church Fathers also saw how the *charismatōn* profited the Church.

The Fathers taught that the *charismatōn* dynamically emphasized the glory of God and edified his Church. For instance, St. Irenaeus (115-202 A.D.) instructed,

Those who are in truth his disciples, receiving grace from him, perform miracles in his name so as to promote the welfare of others, according to the gift which each one has received from him. For some...have foreknowledge of things to come: they see visions and utter prophecies. Still others heal the sick by laying their hands upon them, and they are made whole. Yes, moreover, the dead have even been raised up, and remained among us for many years.⁷

Origen (185-254 A.D.) also saw the importance of the *charismatōn* in the Church. In fact, because he believed that these gifts of grace were associated with Baptism, he intensely prepared catechumens over a two to three year period in which he formed them to expect the *charismatōn* at their Baptism.⁸ Furthermore, he upheld certain gifts of the *charismatōn* because they offered assistance to the intellectual character of the faith, lending assistance to a "higher intellectual

⁷ Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies* (ed. by Dominic J. Unger and John J. Dillon; Vol. 42 of *Ancient Christian Writers*; London: James Parker & Co., 1872), 2.32.4.

⁸ Kilian McDonnell and George T. Montague. *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Evidence from the First Eight Centuries* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1991), 146.

order.”⁹ For Origen, some gifts of the *charismatōn* could assist in providing clarification to the teachings and traditions of the Apostles.

Origen’s teaching on the *charismatōn* established a formal relationship between baptism and the *charismatōn*. He taught that “Baptism ‘in itself’ or ‘by itself’ was the principle and source of the divine charisms for the believer who surrendered to the divinity who acted in the water-bath.”¹⁰ Origen wanted to show how baptism poured other gifts of grace, other than sanctifying grace, into believers since a Trinitarian epiclesis was enacted through the very waters of Baptism.

Hilary of Poitiers (315-367 A.D.) taught that the *charismatōn* were effective because God had instituted them for the proclamation of the Gospel.¹¹ He taught that the gifts profited the Church because the Spirit was the cause of the powerful effects which issued from the *charismatōn*.¹² In short, because Saint Hilary believed that these supernatural gifts of God contributed to the mission of the Church, they were advantageous. The Church, therefore, was accountable to exercise them.¹³

Evidently, the *charismatōn* were of importance to the Church in her early beginnings as the Fathers recognized how they both persuaded others of the Gospel message and demonstrated its remarkable power. The Church was prosperous because of her charismatic nature. However,

⁹ McDonnell and Montague. *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 150.

¹⁰ McDonnell and Montague, *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 140.

¹¹ Hilary of Poitiers. *On the Trinity* (Trans. by Stephen McKenna; Vol. 25 of *The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation*; Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2002), 297.

¹² Hilary, *On the Trinity*, 297.

¹³ Hilary, *On the Trinity*, 298.

by the fourth century, a decline of teaching and using the *charismatōn* seemed to ensue. By this time, the Church had endured the heresy of Montanism, whose founder, Montanus, claimed to have received messages from the Holy Spirit.¹⁴ He went so far as to posit that the revelations he received meant that something could be added to the teachings already given by Christ to his Apostles. Hence, a “fuller” revelation needed to be accepted.¹⁵ Montanus’ claim to prophetic knowledge attracted other followers, and he urged them to practice strict ascetical practices so that they could also receive prophetic gifts and other *charismatōn*.

The teachings that Montanus asserted quickly escalated and appealed to many, which did not go unnoticed by members of the ecclesial hierarchy, who saw through these claims for what they were: a compromise of Christ’s own revelation. Moreover, it became apparent that Montanism also imposed a threat to the ecclesial hierarchy of the Church, as its boast of prophetic knowledge both undermined and opposed their established authority.¹⁶ Although the movement was declared heretical, its effects were not without adverse consequences. Members of the hierarchy increasingly grew suspicious and even doubtful of the authenticity of the charismatic gifts of prophecy and tongues, since Montanists had exploited them as a way to signal God’s presence and power. Unfortunately, this overexaggerated impression of charismatic

¹⁴ Mark W. Elliott, “Montanism” in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology* (ed. by Ian A. McFarland, David A.S. Fergusson, Karen Kilby. Cambridge University Press, 2011). <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/providence/detail.action?docID=691811>. Scholars tend to date Montanism between 135 and 177 A.D.

¹⁵ McDonnell and Montague, *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 116.

¹⁶ “Montanism,” ed. Ian A. McFarland et al. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/providence/detail.action?docID=691811>.

activity appeared much too close to pagan ritual experiences.¹⁷ Consequently, the *charismatōn* were erroneously confused with forms and practices of Montanism.

Secondly, the legalization of Christianity in 313 A.D. by Constantine also made its impact. On one hand, the positive aspect of this historical event decriminalized Christianity. Christianity went from “being a persecuted faith to being the religion of most-favored status.”¹⁸ On the other hand, its legalization yielded to the negative effect of others joining the Church for purely political and social reasons. As the material wealth and prominence of the Church increased, the fervor which had previously animated the Church decreased. Consequently, the zeal that had originally invigorated catechumens in the first three centuries significantly dwindled, which led to the lowering of standards that had been previously used to prepare candidates for the Sacraments of Initiation.

Both historical events had costly implications on the teaching and use of the *charismatōn* that had once permeated the Church, even to the point that St. John Chrysostom (347-407 A.D.) proposed that perhaps they were only intended for the Church in its initial stages. In fact, this was evidenced in his writings as he wrote that “charisms,” which had been so alive in the apostolic age, “had ceased.”¹⁹ Thus, Chrysostom seemed to mourn the disappearance of the *charismatōn* which had once pervaded the Early Church, and even altered his terminology when

¹⁷ Kydd, Ronald. *Charismatic Gifts in the Early Church: The Gifts of the Spirit in the First 300 Years* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2014), 35-36.

¹⁸ Bart D. Ehrman, *The Triumph of Christianity: How a Forbidden Religion Swept the World* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 2018), 35.

¹⁹ John Chrysostom, *Homilies on the First Epistle of St. Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians* (UK: John Henry Parker, 1854), 514.

referring to the *charismatōn* by switching from *charisma* to *dōrea*.²⁰ *Dōrea* had a broader context and encapsulated a number of different meanings, such as “present,” “the gift of the Spirit in baptism,” or “Christ’s teaching.”²¹

St. Augustine initially subscribed to Chrysostom’s belief on the disappearance of the *charismatōn*, until he began chronicling the miraculous accounts that were transpiring which led him to rescind his position. These extraordinary reports, particularly with the woman’s healing from breast cancer, seemed to testify that the *charismatōn* were still present and available to the Church. St. Augustine, it appears, wanted to respond by reigniting the charismatic zeal that had once imbued the Church. This was no easy task, as he attested,

The only trouble is that modern miracles are not so well known as the earlier ones, nor are they sufficiently pounded into people’s memory by constant reading, so that they may stick, as it were, like gravel in cement. Even where pains are taken, as is now the case in Hippo, to have the written depositions of the beneficiaries of these graces read to the people, only those in church hear the stories, and that only once, and the many who are not present hear nothing, and those who have listened forget in a day or so, and you hardly ever hear of a person who has heard a deposition telling it to someone else who was not in church for the reading.²²

Nonetheless, St. Augustine’s efforts in the fourth century did not seem to induce zeal for the *charismatōn* in the way he had hoped. Even theological texts gave little consideration to the *charismatōn* up to the thirteenth century. In fact, teachings grew relatively ambiguous due to debates and opinions regarding the nature of *charismatōn* and their purpose amongst

²⁰ McDonnell and Montague, *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 290.

²¹ McDonnell and Montague, *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 290.

²² Augustine, *City of God*, 447.

theologians.²³ This lack of clarity resulted in the *charismatōn* being generalized. That is, these graces were thrown into a catalogue, as it were, labeled as non-sanctifying gratuitous gifts, and left without an enunciated theology.²⁴ This remained the case until St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) wrote an exposition of these gifts which he referred to as *gratiae gratis datae*. In its singular form, *gratia gratis data* literally translates as “grace gratuitously given.”²⁵ In its plural, *gratiae gratis datae* (graces freely given). Thus, the substantial work that St. Thomas undertook on these graces can afford deeper appreciation.

Between 1261 and 1265, St. Thomas first showed the significance of *gratiae gratis datae* in one of his most well-known works: the *Summa Contra Gentiles*.²⁶ This work, which was divided into four parts, included the notion of *gratia gratis data* within the third part.²⁷ Here, St. Thomas simply regarded these graces as necessary gifts that must be used when the time and place are appropriate.

²³ Bernard Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 24-25. Prior to Thomas’ account of *gratia gratis data*, “there was a time when *gratia gratis data* was more a sweeping gesture than an exact concept, more a catalogue than a category; *gratia gratum faciens* came to denote the essential features of justification and the other term was left with a roving commission.” For instance, St. Albert the Great wrote that *gratia gratis data* could be understood in eight different kinds of ways. In other words, there were multiple possibilities in the predication of *gratia gratis data*. On the other hand, St. Bonaventure believed that *gratia gratis data* was like a habit of the soul and was better categorized as an auxilium grace. These ambiguities remained until Thomas took up the subject in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, and later the *Summa Theologiae*.

²⁴ Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom*, 25.

²⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* (hereafter *ST*) I-II, q. 111 a. 1. Translations of the *ST* are from the English Dominican Fathers (Notre Dame, IN: Christian Classics, 1981).

²⁶ Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Aquinas’s Summa: Background, Structure, and Reception* (Trans. by Benedict Guevin, O.S.B. Catholic University of America Press, 2003), 7. During these years, St. Thomas was in Orvieto, Italy.

²⁷ Torrell, *Aquinas’s Summa*, 8. St. Thomas addressed *gratiae gratis datae* within the “orientation of creatures to God as to their end.”

St. Thomas continued his work on formulating a specific theology for *gratia gratis data* in his masterpiece, the *Summa Theologiae*.²⁸ It was towards the end of the *Prima Secundae* that St. Thomas situated his treatise on grace, the groundwork for the general principles of morality.²⁹ Here, St. Thomas made clear our absolute need for sanctifying grace, or *gratia gratum faciens*, since it was vital for our salvation which rendered us pleasing to God.

But St. Thomas also showed that God endows us with other gifts of grace that orient others to their final end. St. Thomas distinguished *gratia gratis data* from other kinds of gratuitous grace, which he contextualized in the writings of Saint Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. This allowed St. Thomas to posit that while all grace is gratuitous, not all grace is sanctifying: “ingratiatory grace [habitual or sanctifying grace] can be called gratuitous grace, but not conversely, because not every gratuitous grace makes us worthy of eternal life.”³⁰ St. Thomas continued his writing on *gratiae gratis datae* in the *Secunda Secundae* by providing an exposition on the diversity of these freely given graces in qq. 171-178.³¹

²⁸ Torrell, *Aquinas's Summa*, 14. After first beginning the writing of the *Summa* in 1265, St. Thomas diligently began his work on the Second Part which he subdivided into two: the First Part of the Second Part (*Prima Secundae*), and the Second Part of the Second Part (*Secunda Secundae*). His overall work, being enormous as over 300 questions were addressed in nearly two thousand pages, was completed within eighteen months between the years 1268-1272. In another work, Torrell admits that dating the writing of the *Summa* is still debated. Nonetheless, it is generally believed that the *Prima Secundae* was completed during the summer of 1270, while the *Secunda Secundae*, begun shortly thereafter, was completed before the beginning of 1272. See Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas: The Person and His Work* (Translated by Robert Royal, vol. 1; Washington, D.C. Catholic University of America Press, 2003), 146-147.

²⁹ Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas: The Person and His Work* (Trans. by Robert Royal. Vol. 1. Catholic University of America Press, 2003) 148-149. St. Thomas structures the *Prima Secundae* by first focusing on voluntary human acts which have moral qualities. This includes his treatment of internal principles, that is, virtues and vices, which either assist or weakens the human powers. After this discussion, he treats the exterior principles that affect man's action, which are founded upon law and grace.

³⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones Disputatae de Veritate* (trans. by Robert W. Schmidt, S.J.; Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1954), q. 27 a. 1.

³¹ Torrell, *The Person and His Work*, 47. See also Servais Pinckaers, O.P., *The Sources of Christian Ethics* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 1995), 229-230.

Even though the *Summa* was widely circulated and attained a high degree of recognition for its comprehensive nature from schools of learning throughout the Middle Ages, parts of St. Thomas's writings were extracted out of context for use of study.³² This mistake deterred others from understanding his writings holistically, as topics were taken out of their original framework. The brilliant structure with which the *Summa* had been written, then, was interrupted.

What effect did this have on the theology of grace in particular? It meant that by the seventeenth century, grace was "simply removed from moral theory and relegated to dogma."³³ As consequence, the study of moral theology narrowed its focus primarily to cases of conscience, which became the chief topic of modern ethics from the seventeenth century onward.³⁴ Grace was excluded from moral teaching since it seemed to be its own entity. *Gratia gratum faciens* as a sanctifying and necessary gift for personal salvation was dogmatized, which left little room for the non-sanctifying grace of *gratia gratis data*. As a result, a theological dormancy of *gratia gratis data* seemingly ensued, as little consideration was paid to this aspect of grace in the life of the Church following St. Thomas' treatise. His labors, however, would bear fruit centuries later at the time of the Second Vatican Council in 1961 when his writings would be formally retrieved.

³³ Pinckaers, *The Sources of Christian Ethics*, 230.

³⁴ Pinckaers, *The Sources of Christian Ethics*, 231.

By the middle of the twentieth century, *gratia gratis data* was “seen in the sense of the personal vocation without structural value for the Church.”³⁵ In other words, *gratia gratis data* was conceived as a private grace which was neither to be sought nor given much consideration. Some theologians deemed *gratiae gratis datae* “only in terms of their contribution to personal spirituality and were attributed no ecclesiological importance or value.”³⁶ Others attended to *gratia gratum faciens* at the expense of minimizing the role of *gratia gratis data* in the Church, going so far as to state that “it would be temerarious in the normal course of events to desire or to ask God for *gratiae gratis datae*.”³⁷ Because these gifts were “not necessary for salvation and required the direct intervention of God,” it was far more precious to act out of love than charismatic gifts.³⁸

The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council rigorously debated the rightful place of *gratia gratis data* in the Church, and disputed whether these gifts were reserved to certain people, which rendered a response:

Cardinal Ruffini strongly objected to the notion that in our day, many of the faithful are gifted with charisms, and that such people can be relied on to make a significant contribution to the upbuilding of the Church. On the contrary, he argued such gifts today ‘are extremely rare and altogether exceptional.’ In Cardinal Ruffini’s opinion, it is obvious that charisms have no important role to play in the life of the modern Church. For [Cardinal] Suenens, the charisms are no ‘peripheral or accidental phenomenon in the life of the Church.’ On the contrary, they are of vital importance for the building up of the mystical body. While it is true that in the time of St. Paul some charismatic gifts were dramatic and surprising, we should never think that the gifts of the Spirit are exclusively

³⁵ Mary Healy, “The Church Grows Young: Recent Developments in the Doctrine of Charisms,” in *Reading and Living Scripture* (Edited by Jeremy Holmes and Kent Lasnoski; Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2021), 199. See also Elizabeth Teresa Groppe, *Yves Congar’s Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 105.

³⁶ Healy, “The Church Grows Young,” 199.

³⁷ Jordan Aumann, *Spiritual Theology* (London, UK: Bloomsbury Continuum, 2017), 423.

³⁸ Jordan Aumann, *Spiritual Theology*, 423.

and principally in these phenomena which are rather extraordinary and uncommon. Nor are the charisms the privilege of a few; rather, ‘every Christian, educated or simple, has his gift in his daily life...does not each and every one of us here know of laymen and laywomen in his own diocese who are truly called by God? They are endowed by the Spirit with various charisms...without these charisms, the ecclesiastical ministry would be impoverished and sterile.’³⁹

In the end, Cardinal Suenens’ proposal that charisms be given greater emphasis in the life of the Church was accepted.⁴⁰ But this was not achieved without the aid of theologian Yves Congar, who was a catalyst for rejuvenating the relationship between the pneumatological and ecclesiological dimensions of the Church.

Because of the necessary deliberation that surfaced the vital importance of the place of charisms in the Church as a whole, one of the great outcomes of the Second Vatican Council would be in the sphere of charisms [*gratiae gratis datae*], especially in the Dogmatic Constitution, *Lumen Gentium*.⁴¹ This essential document showed what other riches – aside from sanctifying graces – infiltrated the Church by the Spirit who unified her in communion by bestowing hierarchical and charismatic gifts that both adorned and directed her.⁴² Far from situating these realities as two separate entities, the Dogmatic Constitution highlighted how these dimensions were co-essential to the Church:

It is not only through the sacraments and the ministrations of the Church that the Holy Spirit makes holy the People, leads them and enriches them with his virtues. Allotting his gifts according as he wills (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:11), he also distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts he makes them fit and ready to undertake

³⁹ Francis A. Sullivan, *Charisms and Charismatic Renewal: A Biblical and Theological Study* (Wipf and Stock and Publishers, 2004), 10-11.

⁴⁰ Sullivan, *Charisms and Charismatic*, 11.

⁴¹ Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit* (trans. by David Smith; Vol. 1. New York: Crossroad Pub, 1997), 170.

⁴² Second Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church: Lumen Gentium* (ed. by Austin P. Flannery; Vol. 1; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978), 4.

various tasks and offices for the renewal and building up of the Church, as it is written, “the manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit” (1 Corinthians 12:7). Whether these charisms be very remarkable or more simple and widely diffused, they are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation since they are fitting and useful for the needs of the Church. Extraordinary gifts are not to be rashly desired, nor is it from them that the fruits of apostolic labors are to be presumptuously expected. Those who have charge over the Church should judge their genuineness and proper use of these gifts, through their office not indeed to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to what is good (cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:12; 19-21).⁴³

The Vatican Council would not only reaffirm the enduring validity of charismatic gifts and describe their function as one of renewing and building up the Church in the Spirit, but also affirm the notion that the whole Church, by her very nature, was charismatic. It seems, then, that the writings of *gratiae gratis datae* by the Angelic Doctor did finally achieve appreciation centuries after its composition.⁴⁴

What then, is the place of *gratia gratis data* in the Church and how does it compare with *gratia gratum faciens*? If the Early Fathers emphasized its importance, how does its relevance apply to individuals within the Church today? Furthermore, why is this grace so necessary to use for others? The following study will embark upon an investigation to provide an adequate response to these questions by employing the mature treatise on grace by St. Thomas Aquinas. We will make our approach first by understanding our own radical need for sanctifying grace, or *gratia gratum faciens*, and the constant helps that God provides that St. Thomas discusses in q. 109 of the *Prima Secunda*. Secondly, we will proceed to q. 110 and consider how sanctifying grace is an infused habit which heals and elevates our souls, and the role of the Holy Spirit who accompanies us in our heavenly journey. Thirdly, our understanding of *gratia gratum faciens*

⁴³*Lumen Gentium*, 12.

⁴⁴ Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 172 (vol.I).

will afford us the opportunity to observe how *gratiae gratis datae*, or the *charismatōn*, are situated in the writings of St. Paul. This will provide us with the necessary avenue by which we will advance to q. 111 where St. Thomas distinguishes *gratiae gratis datae* as non-sanctifying gifts of grace which are furthered specified in qq. 171-178 of the *Secunda Secundae*. By understanding these particular gratuitous graces, we will come to see why God unreservedly bestows this grace upon others in order to both increase His glory and confront evil. Finally, the Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic constitution, *Lumen Gentium*, along with the work of Dominican theologian Yves Congar, will show how St. Thomas' writings contributed to the reawakening of the Church's understanding of her charismatic nature.

The hope and intention for this study is that it propels many to recognize that the Gospel message of Christ, which was handed on to His Apostles, does not come in word alone. The Gospel *continues* to come "in power and in the Holy Spirit with much conviction" (1 Thess. 1:4-5). Rather than segregating certain groups or individuals within the Church as charismatic, we can instead acknowledge that every Christian – and indeed the entire Church – is charismatic by virtue of belonging to Christ's body. Because God *chooses* to work through *gratiae gratis datae*, the Church is tasked with the responsibility of encouraging her faithful to exercise these transcendent gifts of grace so that she may more effectively engage in the salvific mission that has been entrusted to her. Perhaps it may be considered, then, that *gratiae gratis datae* is necessary for not only the edification and unification of the Church, but also the attacks of evil that oppose her. God munificently bestows this aid upon his Church, and it is fitting that he should endow such gifts on his Church which is called to zealously seek the salvation of all souls.

CHAPTER I: OUR NEED FOR GRACE

In order for us to come to an understanding of what *gratiae gratis datae* is in the life of the Church, we must first come to see how sanctifying grace, or *gratia gratum faciens*, is necessary for our salvation. In his writings, St. Irenaeus wrote that “the glory of God is man fully alive, and the life of man is the vision of God,” which suitably offers contextualization for our study of *gratia gratum faciens*.⁴⁵ St. Thomas Aquinas knew well the necessity that this grace played in bringing us to this vision, and endeavored to show how it accompanies us in our transcendent journey towards God and renders us fitting to see him face-to-face. Grace is a gift that, because of the divine initiative and contribution, enables us to successfully reach God as final end. All of us desire this end, whether we recognize it or not. That is, we wish for the complete satiation of happiness, which is to know and love God, who is the universal good.⁴⁶ We are created and ordered for this good and are equipped with powers of intellect and will that give us the capacity to reach it. Although these powers in themselves are radically deficient in proportion to the vision of God that infinitely surpasses our nature, God actualizes our faculties in order to bring our desired happiness to fruition.⁴⁷ He first makes this possible by sending Christ, whose fullness in grace has enabled us to receive grace upon grace (John 1:16 RSV) and by whom we are deemed worthy to share in eternal glory.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 4.20.7.

⁴⁶ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 1 a. 7 and q. 2, a. 8.

⁴⁷ Daria E. Spezzano, *The Glory of God's Grace: Deification According to Saint Thomas Aquinas* (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia Press of Ave Maria University, 2015), 111. See also Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 3 a. 8 and q. 4 a. 8.

⁴⁸ Aquinas, *ST III*, q. 8 a. 1.

Grace, which is given in Baptism, is the “exterior principle of the human acts” that leads us to our heavenly homeland.⁴⁹ This external and transcendent principle is at the root of the divinely infused *habitus* which heals and elevate our faculties.⁵⁰ Because grace is always possible to us because of Christ who is our graced means, how may we obtain this undeserved and unmeritorious gift that has been made possible through his merits? St. Thomas labors to show a thorough resolution to this inquiry by beginning his treatise on grace by positing our great need for it. In order to effectively grasp this understanding, we will first proceed by comparing our need for grace before and after our fall into sin, and then continue our advancement by keeping within the framework of our nature after Original sin. This same framework will also allow us to analyze our ability to exercise our rational faculties from both the natural and supernatural standpoints with and without grace. Secondly, we will see what the role of grace is in our intellect when it comes to knowing the truth. Thirdly, we will speculate whether our wills are capable of willing the good with or without grace. Finally, we will examine the essential tasks of habitual and auxiliary grace in our journey towards eternal happiness and how the role of *auxilium* is indispensable in our receptivity of grace. Furthermore, we will come to understand why we cannot rely upon our own strength to reach this end without falling into Pelagianism. By recognizing how grace elevates, heals, and aids us to avoid sin and strengthen our resolve to do good, we will come to see how grace is the beginning of God’s glory in us.

⁴⁹ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 1, prol. Law is also an exterior principle of human acts, but does not elevate us to a supernatural level since this belongs to the nature of grace.

⁵⁰ Torrell, *Aquinas’s Summa*, 34.

Our Need for Grace before and after the Fall

As we approach the consideration of our need for grace, we will briefly turn to the role of grace before and after the Fall.⁵¹ Before sin was introduced into the world, God conferred upon us the “supernatural gift of sanctifying grace (from the moment that he created man), which made of us adoptive sons and daughters in whom the divine Persons of the Trinity might dwell.”⁵² Our ordered faculties, in harmony with God’s original design, did not have to contend with ignorance, weakness, or disorder in relationships. We referred the love of ourselves and of all other things to the love of God as our end, and thus we loved God above ourselves and all things.⁵³ Because we enjoyed a harmonious relationship with God, ourselves and others, we were able to exercise our dominion over the things of the earth which had been entrusted by our Divine Creator (cf. Genesis 1:26-31).

This “original grace of man” had a “character of virginity” insofar as there was no “previous sin to expiate or repair; it was, as it were, young, fresh, and entirely new.”⁵⁴ While we did not require grace at this point to know or do the natural good because it was proportional to our nature, we still nevertheless required grace to perform supernatural good.⁵⁵ In other words, for those acts that required *infused* virtue, we needed God’s grace because we were not naturally

⁵¹ Cf. Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 2.

⁵² Charles Journet, *The Meaning of Grace* (trans. by A.V. Littledale; Princeton, NJ.: Scepter Publishers, 1996), 85.

⁵³ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 3.

⁵⁴ Journet, *The Meaning of Grace*, 85.

⁵⁵ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 2.

capable of elevating ourselves to the triune life of God. This prerogative pertained only to the divine initiative.

Following Original Sin, we must take seriously “the damage done by sin even to our natural capacities, and especially the will” which we have used in choosing to sever our harmonious relationship with God.⁵⁶ We are in desperate need of God’s benevolence if we are to hope of knowing truths or accomplish the apprehended good. Comparatively speaking, our human nature “is more corrupt by sin in regard to the desire for good, than in regard to the knowledge of truth, because the result of sin is the failure in the good which belongs to any being according to its nature.”⁵⁷ In our present wounded nature, we need gratuitous strength in order to be healed and raised up. We need grace to know what is beyond the capability of our senses, and furthermore, “in order to carry out works of supernatural virtue.”⁵⁸ Unless we are healed and elevated by the gratuitous grace of God, we are destitute and cannot hope to reach eternal beatitude.⁵⁹

The Need for Grace in our Intellectual Power

Given this context of our need for grace after the Fall, we can proceed to how we need grace to know natural and supernatural truths.⁶⁰ In terms of being able to know the natural truth,

⁵⁶ Spezzano, *The Glory of God’s Grace*, 120.

⁵⁷ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 2.

⁵⁸ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 2 ad. 2-3.

⁵⁹ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 3 ad. 3.

⁶⁰ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 1.

St. Thomas regards our ability according to “what falls within the scope of a being given its nature.”⁶¹ When our intellectual power is able to grasp natures through intelligible species through our external sensitive faculties as recorded by phantasms, we can arrive at a natural truth.⁶² However, if a truth is beyond our share in the intelligible light as may be the case with “whatever is not corporeal or necessarily attached to body,” we require the assistance of grace.⁶³ Without the help of God in coming to know even natural truths of his created order, we are incapable to arrive at that truth on our own.⁶⁴ St. Thomas illustrates this teaching by explaining that just as the material sun sheds its light in the created world, so does the “intelligible Sun, who is God, shines within us.”⁶⁵ The things that we are able to know naturally is due to God’s enlightenment, which enables us to come to deeper understanding of that which belongs to natural knowledge.

In terms of the supernatural truth, we need God’s enlightenment since such truths are beyond our natural reason.⁶⁶

⁶¹ Joseph Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” in *The Westminster Handbook to St. Thomas Aquinas* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 63.

⁶² Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 1.

⁶³ Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 64.

⁶⁴ It is important to note that Aquinas’s teaching here makes clear that while grace may not be necessary for our senses to operate, grace “can enlighten us to know natural truths that would otherwise elude us.” See Brian Mullady, O.P., *Grace Explained: How to Receive - and Retain - God's Most Potent Gift* (AL.: EWTN Publishing, 2021), 67.

⁶⁵ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 1.

⁶⁶ Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Grace: Commentary on the Summa Theologica of St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q. 109-114* (Translated by the Dominican Nuns. Saint Louis, MO.: B. Herder Book CO., 1952) 45. Garrigou-Lagrange also affirms that “our intellect is a power infused into us by God and, granted that it is darkened by sin, yet it is not extinct. Therefore, it can of itself, with natural concurrence, arrive at a knowledge of certain natural truths.”

Now every form bestowed on created things by God has power for a determined act, which it can bring about in proportion to its own proper endowment; and beyond which it is powerless, except by a superadded form, as water can only heat when heated by the fire. And thus, the human understanding has a form, viz., intelligible light, which of itself is sufficient for knowing certain intelligible things, viz., those we can come to know through the senses. Higher intelligible things the human intellect cannot know unless it be perfected by a stronger light.⁶⁷

Our intellect requires grace for the elevation of our reason that is not proportional to the things pertaining to God. In other words, we need God's illuminating power over our darkened intellects to understand the light of faith, prophecy, or spiritual truth since these are beyond our capacity to know by ourselves.⁶⁸ Thus, grace enlightens our intellect that we may know supernatural truths. While this understanding of our need for grace seems to authorize a clear difference between our need for grace to pursue natural and supernatural truths, we can now approach in what ways we need grace in our will.

The Role of Grace in our Will

If it is true that there are some truths that our intellect can sufficiently know without grace, but requires it for the pursuit of supernatural realities, can we presume to make the same associations with our volitional power? Put another way, does our will need grace to do both the natural and supernatural good? Keeping within the consideration of our nature after the Fall, it may seem obvious that this is the case in the pursuit of supernatural good, but St. Thomas also posits that we need grace in pursuit of even the natural good. To understand why, we must return

⁶⁷ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 1.

⁶⁸ Garrigou-Lagrange, *Grace*, 63.

to the notion of how sin has direly complicated and disordered our own powers that has placed us not only “out of allegiance with God,” but also wages war within our very selves.⁶⁹ That is to say, our fallen powers flow from a fallen nature as we struggle with a clouded intellect and malice in our will that often contends yet easily succumbs to the weakness and concupiscence in our passions. We find that the lower faculties are not susceptible to the lead of our higher, rational self.⁷⁰ While our will is able to choose some good things, just as a sick person is able to make some movements on his own although imperfectly, the good that is proportional to us as humans is unattainable without the aid of grace in our will.⁷¹ No one attains God as end without grace. But after sin, grace is also “needed in order to do the good that is natural” to us.⁷²

Grace is God’s response to aid our fallen human faculties since it “bridges the ontological gap between the rational creature and the God” who is our end.⁷³ The divine initiative – out of sheer love – bestows us with the extraordinary gift of grace that elevates us to our supernatural end and enables us to act in a supernatural way. Here, we arrive at distinguishing sanctifying (habitual) grace, or *gratia gratum faciens*, and the non-sanctifying (non-habitual) grace of *auxilium* – that God supplies to enliven and achieve his glory within us.

⁶⁹ Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 64.

⁷⁰ Garrigou-Lagrange, *Grace*, 63.

⁷¹ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 2.

⁷² Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 63.

⁷³ Mullady, O.P., *Grace Explained*, 56. St. Thomas also expounds on the justification of the soul in q. 113 of *Prima Secundae* in which he refers to the restoration of order and the remission of sin.

Grace as the Seed of Glory

On one hand, habitual grace “boosts the capacities of the person to the supernatural level and provides the potential for supernatural activity.”⁷⁴ On the other hand, the grace of *auxilium*, which literally means “aid” or “help,” reduces the person to supernatural action:

As its name indicates, the first kind of grace is a habit, a steady disposition to act in a certain way. It adds power to the person, thus rendering possible acts of a certain kind. The other grace, *auxilium*, bespeaks God’s active involvement in human acting. A power is needed for an action. But a power does not reduce itself to an act. Rather, something already in an act must reduce the potential to act. For Aquinas, when talking about the movement of rational creatures to God as their end, this something in an act is God. God reduces the potential constituted by habitual grace, the added endowment of the person, to act, by *auxilium*.⁷⁵

The relationship of habitual grace and auxiliary grace are a combined gift that make it possible for us to reach our eternal beatitude. To understand both graces more clearly however, we will examine each kind.

Habitual Grace

Habitual grace is an infused gift that establishes a firm disposition in our souls which elevates us to partake of the divine nature. It adds “power to the person, thus rendering possible acts of a certain kind.”⁷⁶ This kind of grace is precisely “the principle of meritorious works,” which not only elevates us, but “heals the fallen and disrupted self, restoring correct order within

⁷⁴ Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 64.

⁷⁵ Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 65.

⁷⁶ Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 64.

the self just as it restores the whole person to subjection to God.”⁷⁷ Habitual grace roots us in the disposition to receive God’s movements, just as a tree that is rooted in soil can receive the nourishment provided by nature.⁷⁸ But because habitual grace does not reduce itself to action, *auxilium* is provided.

Auxiliary Grace

By the grace of *auxilium*, we are moved by God so that we are capable to act in a supernatural way. The grace of *auxilium* caters the “movement to actualization of the new potency this form bestows.”⁷⁹ In other words, *auxilium* conveys God’s activity within human acting because a certain power is needed for an action.⁸⁰ While habitual grace stabilizes us for a certain disposition, the grace of *auxilium* provides us strength to act according to the natural and supernatural good as we continue to face the tension of sin. When we are confronted by the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, *auxilium* aids us so that we may be strengthened to perform correct moral actions.⁸¹ While *auxilium* is not an operation of the soul, it still is nevertheless a motion in which “the soul is moved by God toward something... so that the application of the faculties may pass from potency to act and elicit operation.”⁸² Any good that

⁷⁷ Spezzano, *The Glory of God’s Grace*, 125; Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 65.

⁷⁸ Journet, *The Meaning of Grace*, 23.

⁷⁹ Spezzano, *The Glory of God’s Grace*, 120-121.

⁸⁰ Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 64.

⁸¹ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 6 ad. 10.

⁸² Aquinas, *ST I-II* q. 110 a. 2; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Grace*, 118.

we do, then, is due to God's gift of grace. Because God as first cause of all good acts works through us in order to achieve the good, we can humbly consider ourselves as the secondary cause of the good act.⁸³ Consequently, *auxilium* is "needed at every step of the journey, as the first efficient cause of every movement taken toward the end," and which moves us to a greater intensity of divine intimacy.⁸⁴

Therefore, in God's infinite and incomprehensible wisdom, he extends both habitual and auxiliary grace. By habitual grace, we truly are enabled to partake of the divine nature and, with the help of *auxilium*, act according to the divine mode. This divine assistance endows us to live righteously as sons and daughters of the Father, grants us to become partakers in the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:3-4). By grace, we are made heirs of the eternal kingdom (Galatians 4:6-7). While our discussion on habitual and auxiliary will continue in the following chapter once we come to understand what the nature of this grace is, it will be appropriate here to posit the relationship between cooperation and grace.

⁸³ Journet, *The Meaning of Grace*, 36-37. Journet also provides an extensive teaching on the relationship between grace and freedom in the good act. He explains that the good act comes "from God *and* man, from grace *and* freedom." He goes on to give very descriptive examples of how the good act involves both God *and* man and negates the various fallacies and complications throughout history that have confused the relationship between man's freedom and the good act. On one side, it has been falsely understood that good acts are the result of man's initiative as held in Pelagianism. Or, on the other side of the spectrum, it has also been false to believe that man is completely incapable of doing any good and thereby exists in a total state of depravity, in which God only performs the good in man, as held by Lutheranism. What is correct to say is that God is first cause of the good act, while man is the secondary cause. Journet goes on to distinguish the good act from the evil act, and why man is only capable of performing an evil act: "In the evil act, man is first cause of the deviation, that is of the non-being, the disorder, the destruction. *Homo prima causa mali*: man is *first* cause of evil! But can he be first cause of anything? Yes, he can be first cause of whatever is not a thing; he can do what is *no thing* – he can destroy, annihilate the divine action that comes to visit him. Here man can take the first initiative; he is first cause of the annulling of the divine action."

⁸⁴ Spezzano, *The Glory of God's Grace*, 124.

Cooperation and Grace

As we have seen, God's divine initiative to give us grace is the only way we receive grace. We are unable to put off our old and fallen nature by sheer will. We are radically dependent on the gratuitous strength that disposes us to cooperate with grace. While cooperation with grace places us in the proper disposition for justification, God's grace does not wait upon our initiative. As the name suggests, God's grace is gratuitous and unmerited.⁸⁵ His gift flows from a supreme love that wills us to be fully alive and see him face-to-face. So then, how may we prepare to cooperate with grace?

We may cooperate with grace insofar that we make an act of the will that corresponds to the grace that God offers us. Again, our desire to cooperate with grace is already an operative *auxilia* at work. God does not interfere with the *modus operandi* of our will but provides us with an inclination towards a disposition that enables us to freely respond. While we may prepare for grace by turning away from sin – although we may not be able to avoid every act of sin, except by grace – God does not necessarily anticipate our resolve to turn away from sin in order to give grace.⁸⁶ God may confer as many inclinations as possible to our appetitive power that forms a proper disposition for the reception of grace. But if we were to assume that grace could be merited, it would lead to the absurdity that grace could be taken by storm.⁸⁷ However, God gives his grace according to the capacity of the one who receives it.⁸⁸ If preparation for grace results in

⁸⁵ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 2.

⁸⁶ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 8 ad. 1.

⁸⁷ Lawler, "Grace and Free Will in Justification," 609.

⁸⁸ Lawler, "Grace and Free Will in Justification," 609.

God giving grace, it is out of God's good will toward us, because "grace is due to the gratuitous goodness of God with whom the initiative always rests."⁸⁹ At the same time, God takes into account the good works we do which can dispose us to receive grace so that any good we do is a fruit of grace already given. Good works in themselves do not function as substitutes for grace.

Misunderstandings with our Need for Grace

However, this notion of good works replacing our need for grace was problematic for fifth-century Pelagius (ca. 355-420) who believed that good works could achieve salvation. By positing that we could reach our eternal beatitude without grace, Pelagius circulated the false teaching that sin neither impeded nor hindered our human faculties. To complicate matters even further, he refuted the teachings of his contemporary, St. Augustine of Hippo, who held that our nature was fallen from sin and therefore necessitated a metaphysical remedy which grace provided for our journey to Heaven.⁹⁰ However, Pelagius emphasized that by doing works of penance and persistent obedience, we could undo the effects of our sin which, subsequently, would procure healing for our tainted and fallen human nature. This teaching led to the erroneous conclusion that we had no need for grace. For Pelagius, grace was "in terms of God's manifold

⁸⁹ Lawler, "Grace and Free Will in Justification," 609.

⁹⁰ "Pelagianism" ed. Ian A. McFarland et al. <https://providence.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://search.credoreference.com/content/entry/cupdct/pelagianism/0?institutionId=203>; Augustine argued that the sin of Adam and Eve had corrupted human nature, and that grace was understood to be a "gratuitous divine enabling of damaged human abilities."

ways of encouraging the proper exercise of human capacities that were in principle sound.”⁹¹ We were capable of refraining from sin and initiating “the life of faith apart from any gift of grace separate from those given through humanity’s created nature and the gift of the law.”⁹² Sin, therefore, did not impose an impediment upon human nature. We could achieve salvation through our own works insofar that our volitional appetite willed the good.

However, St. Augustine of Hippo (c. 354-430) rebutted these false teachings by counter-arguing that our salvation was achievable through an upright will alone.⁹³ He supported his case by distinguishing operative and cooperative grace, a distinction which St. Thomas relied on centuries later.⁹⁴ Drawing from the teachings of St. Augustine, St. Thomas clearly recognized that both habitual and auxiliary grace was needed for us to do and will the good.

⁹¹ “Pelagianism” ed. Ian A. McFarland et al.
<https://providence.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://search.credoreference.com/content/entry/cupdct/pelagianism/0?institutionId=203>

⁹² “Pelagianism” ed. Ian A. McFarland et al.
<https://providence.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://search.credoreference.com/content/entry/cupdct/pelagianism/0?institutionId=203>

⁹³ Augustine, *Grace and Free Will*, (Ed. Philip Shaff in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*; Trans. by Peter Holmes and Robert Ernest Wallis; NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1887). The abstract explains that Augustine teaches one to “beware of maintaining grace by denying free will, or free will by denying grace; for that it is evident from the testimony of Scripture that there is in man a free choice of will; and there are also in the same Scriptures inspired proofs given of that very grace of God without which we can do nothing good. Afterwards, in opposition to the Pelagians, he proves that grace is not bestowed according to our merits. He explains how eternal life, which is rendered to good works, is really of grace. He then goes on to show that the grace which is given to us through our Lord Jesus Christ is neither the knowledge of the law, nor nature, nor simply remission of sins; but that it is grace that makes us fulfil the law and causes nature to be liberated from the dominion of sin.”

⁹⁴ Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom*, 242.

From the *Scriptum* to the *Summa* – Development on the Writings of Grace

The writings that St. Thomas provided on grace did undergo considerable development, which is worth noting here before continuing to our discussion on the relationship between grace and perseverance. In the *Scriptum super libros sententiarum Petri Lombardi*,⁹⁵ St. Thomas recognized habitual grace exclusively.⁹⁶ In this text, he did not yet recognize the grace of *auxilium*, nor did he regard the disastrous effects of sin on human nature as intensely. Because St. Thomas only recognized habitual grace in the *Scriptum*, he approached a person out of the state of grace and in the state of grace very differently from that of the *Summa*.

According to the *Scriptum*, a person out of the state of grace had to initiate his own movement towards God, and consequently be “met by God’s granting of habitual grace.”⁹⁷ Human acts could “remotely prepare and dispose the person for the reception of grace.”⁹⁸ For a person in the state of grace, no other grace was needed to help him overcome temptation or provide aid for good intentions. However, St. Thomas further developed his writings – which is reflected in the *Summa* – when his close reading of St. Augustine’s works led him to correct the teachings that had insinuated semi-Pelagianism.⁹⁹ Nevertheless, we can see the benefits of St.

⁹⁵ Translated as the *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*.

⁹⁶ Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 67.

⁹⁷ Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 67.

⁹⁸ Spezzano, *The Glory of God’s Grace*, 122.

⁹⁹ Spezzano, *The Glory of God’s Grace*, 122; Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 67. Semi-Pelagianism was the belief that the beginning of our good acts came from us. By seeing this good beginning in us, God would then give us grace to complete them. Thus, Semi-Pelagianism rejected all together the role and need even for *auxilium*.

Thomas's studies which are reflected in the *Summa*, which provide a "clearer grasp of the necessity of the divine premotion in every movement of the will."¹⁰⁰

Grace that Upholds Us in Struggle

From all that has been said so far, we can recognize that God's grace is necessary for us to continuously perform and persevere in the good. If we are to properly carry out an act of virtue, this internal movement must be stoked by the exterior principle caused first by God. Our free will acts as an instrumental cause of good works, while the principal cause is grace.¹⁰¹ In other words, grace is first needed for the rightly ordered operation of the power of the will and for the enjoyment of God.¹⁰² Hence, God works with man in his salvation, so that God who begins a good work in man may also bring it to completion by his grace (cf. Philippians 1:6).

St. Thomas elucidates for us that we need the continual assistance of grace to act uprightly, saying,

[Man] needs the help of grace in order to be moved by God to act righteously, and this for two reasons: first, for the general reason that no created thing can put forth any act, unless by virtue of the Divine motion. Secondly, for this special reason – the condition of the state of human nature. For although healed by grace as to the mind, yet it remains corrupted and poisoned in the flesh...in the intellect, too, there remains the darkness of ignorance...since on account of the various turns of circumstances, and because we do not know ourselves perfectly, we cannot fully know what is for our good. Hence, we must be guided and guarded by God, who knows and can do all things. For which reason also it is becoming in those who have been born again as sons of God, to say: Lead us not into

¹⁰⁰ Spezzano, *The Glory of God's Grace*, 123.

¹⁰¹ Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom*, 245.

¹⁰² Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 6.

temptation, and Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven, and whatever else is contained in the Lord's Prayer pertaining to this.¹⁰³

We need the help of grace to persevere in the good, since our nature will always struggle against the effects of sin that tempt our faculties to evil.¹⁰⁴ The gift of habitual grace protects and upholds us in our struggle against sin. This does not mean that we need another habitual grace, but it does mean that we constantly need the divine assistance given through auxiliary grace which strengthens us.¹⁰⁵ Our constant need for grace to persevere does not mean that it is given to us imperfectly, but rather in such a way that keeps us constantly reliant on the help of grace.¹⁰⁶ So, we are able to have confidence as we approach the throne of grace which is given in time of need (cf. Hebrews 4:16).

Conclusion

God reveals and distributes his gift of grace freely by providing our fallen human nature with the strength and aid that proportions us to our Heavenly homeland. Grace is necessary to reach this end, as it elevates and heals us, which gives us a share in God's glory even now and makes us truly alive. God's abundant mercy and benevolence provide us with divine help so that

¹⁰³ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 9.

¹⁰⁴ Spezzano, *The Glory of God's Grace*, 124.

¹⁰⁵ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 10 ad. 3.

¹⁰⁶ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 9. ad. 1.

we may act with this end in view.¹⁰⁷ Grace “heals, restores, and transforms” our human heart so that it may beat for divine intimacy. Thus, we only achieve our supernatural end with supernatural aids. Grace helps us to achieve union with God, not because we deserve or merit grace, but because God has made us for himself. We will see next how our journey to God is not made alone but is rather joined by the Holy Spirit, who is poured into our hearts and accompanies our interior transformation (cf. Romans 5:5).

¹⁰⁷ Jean-Pierre Torrell, *St. Thomas Aquinas: Spiritual Master* (Trans. by Robert Royal; Vol. 2. Catholic University of America Press, 2003), 180.

CHAPTER II: THE GIFT OF *GRATIA GRATUM FACIENS*

Having established our absolute need for grace which issues from God's munificence toward us, we are prepared to see how this grace truly transforms us and makes us fully alive. In order to achieve this end, we will juxtapose our understanding of the remarkable and transcendent mystery of *gratia gratum faciens* with the role of the Holy Spirit. Through this pneumatological lens, we will be enabled to see how the Holy Spirit, who is the Gift in the Trinitarian processions, is given to us so that we are sustained in our journey towards beatitude. We will proceed first by surveying the relationship of the New Law to grace, where we shall consider the New Law as the grace of the Holy Spirit. Secondly, we will see how this same grace of the Holy Spirit issues from God's bountiful love and transforms us into his likeness (2 Corinthians 3:18). Thirdly, we will see how *gratia gratum faciens* infuses the soul with charity, and subsequently enables the Holy Spirit to pour forth his gifts into us. These means will help us briefly acknowledge the "zones of pneumatological concentration" that pervade the *Summa*.¹⁰⁸

Because the Holy Spirit has been given to us due to the love that God has poured forth, we are accompanied in our journey to our beatitude. The Holy Spirit is properly called "gift" in the sense of how he proceeds from the Father and the Son as love. This love proceeds as spirit, which "name expresses a certain vital movement and impulse, accordingly as anyone is

¹⁰⁸ See Torrell, *Spiritual Master*, 155. Torrell makes note that while the Holy Spirit is present throughout the writings of St. Thomas in the *Summa Theologiae*, the Holy Spirit is most explicit in the treatise on grace, the treatise on the New Law (I-II, qq.106-108), and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, beatitudes, and fruits (I, qq. 68-70). Our consideration of these writings will briefly look at the role of the Holy Spirit in the New Law and the infusion of his Gifts.

described as moved or impelled by love to perform an action.”¹⁰⁹ The Holy Spirit, then, “proceeds as the love of the primal goodness.”¹¹⁰ The Holy Spirit can be properly called Gift because the Holy Spirit gives Himself and is given from the Father who first loved us (cf. 1 John 4:19).¹¹¹ Because the Holy Spirit proceeds as gift from the Father and the Son, we also are elevated to participate in divine friendship where the Holy Spirit comes to us.¹¹² St. Thomas explains that “before a gift is given, it belongs only to the giver; but when it is given, it is his to whom it is given.”¹¹³ The Holy Spirit makes us friends of God and enables his life and love to be poured into our hearts.

We are beneficiaries of this love since the Holy Spirit, who has been given as Gift and, through the measure of Christ, is the source from where all gifts come.¹¹⁴ The New Law, which makes justification and the divine indwelling possible, has an essential relationship with grace. While the New Law has external and internal precepts, we will see how it differs from the Old Law that did not justify in the way that the New Law does.

¹⁰⁹ Aquinas, *ST I*, q. 38 a. 2.

¹¹⁰ Aquinas, *ST I*, q. 37 a. 2 ad. 3.

¹¹¹ See Torrell, *Spiritual Master*, 165. Here, Torrell discusses the first effect of God’s gift, charity, which is “the presence of the Giver Himself, the Holy Spirit...which comes to dwell in the souls of the just.”

¹¹² Aquinas, *ST I*, q. 38 a. 2.

¹¹³ Aquinas, *ST I*, q. 38 a. 1.

¹¹⁴ Aquinas, *ST I*, q. 38 a. 2.

The Relationship between the New Law and Grace

What, then, is the relationship between the New Law and grace? We can observe how St. Thomas distinguishes the primary and secondary senses of the New Law. In its primary sense, the New Law is “chiefly the grace of the Holy Spirit, which is given to those who believe in Christ.”¹¹⁵ Because faith is a gift that enables us to believe toward God, it draws us into the life of grace which justifies us. We are justified by “grace as a gift through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood to be received by faith” (Romans 3:23-24; 26). The New Law, then, primarily justifies us because it is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in our soul.¹¹⁶

In its secondary sense, the New Law is a written law that contains certain things that disposes us “to receive the grace of the Holy Spirit, and pertain to the use of that grace.”¹¹⁷ It consists of the external precepts that Christ established through his teachings, along with the liturgy and Sacraments of His Church. These are necessary elements for us as the faithful, who need “to be instructed concerning what should be believed and as to what we should do.”¹¹⁸ They are the secondary elements of the New Law.¹¹⁹ The New Law in the first place is a law that is inscribed on our hearts, but is secondarily “a written law” that particularly contains the message

¹¹⁵ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 113 a. 2.

¹¹⁶ Mullady, *Grace Explained*, 56.

¹¹⁷ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 106 a. 1.

¹¹⁸ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 106 a. 1.

¹¹⁹ Mullady, *Grace Explained*, 53.

and ordinances of Christ in the Gospel.¹²⁰ Essentially, it is important to understand that the New Law, which is the grace of the Spirit, should not be reduced to a set of codes and regulations for how we ought to live, but rather is a gift that empowers us in our Christian living in our journey towards God, our supreme good.

The New Law Compared with the Old Law

How, then, can we understand the New Law from the Old Law? St. Thomas can further aid us as he draws a comparison: “The Old Law is like a pedagogue of children, whereas the New Law is the law of perfection, since it is the law of charity.”¹²¹ On one hand, the Old Law induced men to observe its commandments by threatening them with penalties and consequently called the law of fear. On the other hand, the New Law, derives “its preeminence from the spiritual grace instilled into our hearts, [and] is called the Law of love.”¹²² The main purpose of the Old Law was to prepare the people for Christ. After Christ came, he gave the New Law so that we might be justified. His merits establish the New Law which confront and overcome what sin poses to our salvation.

We can think of the Old Law as God’s way of directing us to Himself, just as “the father of a family [who] issues different commands to the children and to the adults” while they are yet

¹²⁰ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 106 a. 1 ad. 1.

¹²¹ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 107 a. 1. St. Paul writes in Galatians 3:24-25 that “the law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a custodian; for in Christ Jesus, you are all sons of God, through faith.

¹²² Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 106 a. 2.

imperfect.”¹²³ The New Law empowers us to live in union with God, through the “interior presence and power of the Holy Spirit” who, “by the preceding law, has been led to a greater capacity for divine things.”¹²⁴ Like a ladder to Heaven, the New Law is God’s entryway of perfection and charity that brings us into Trinitarian intimacy now on earth while the full enjoyment of that union awaits us in the beatific vision.¹²⁵ Thus, while these two laws have God for their end, the New Law is more closely connected to that end.¹²⁶

Through justification, we are enabled to freely choose God and thus move from the state of interior injustice, or sin, to the state of justice.¹²⁷ This movement is through the *auxilium* which disposes our intellect to know God as our final end and directs our will to choose to love God above all things.¹²⁸ Grace effects justification in us because, by faith infused with charity, the will is brought to love through the intellect.¹²⁹ We can thus say that justification is “both the forgiveness of sins and the indwelling of the Spirit.”¹³⁰ The grace received in the soul is a free, unmerited, and gratuitous gift of the radical love of God.¹³¹ Just as God sent his Spirit over the

¹²³ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 91 a. 5 ad. 1.

¹²⁴ Mullady, *Grace Explained*, 52; Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 91 a. 5 ad. 1 and 2.

¹²⁵ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 107 a. 1.

¹²⁶ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 107 a. 1.

¹²⁷ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 113 a. 2.

¹²⁸ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 113 a. 3.

¹²⁹ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 113 a. 4 ad. 1.

¹³⁰ Mullady, *Grace Explained*, 87.

¹³¹ Mullady, *Grace Explained*, 52.

chaos of waters in Genesis and brought order to creation, God claims us as a new creation through the New Law which transforms us inwardly (cf. Genesis 1:1-2).

The Meaning and Transformative Power of Grace

“God destined us in an adoption through Jesus Christ, such was in accordance with his will and pleasure – to the praise of his glorious grace...” (cf. Ephesians 1:5-6).¹³² God’s intense love is not contingent upon our moral goodness.¹³³ Rather, we are beloved by God due to his immeasurable charity. This *caritas* elevates us above our own weak nature so that we might participate in God’s divine goodness and outpouring of his supernatural, created grace.¹³⁴ This love, translated into the gift of his grace, is “because God wills to give of himself as far as he can be received.”¹³⁵ The tremendous gift of grace, therefore, “involves a true interior change which is both the forgiveness of sins and something more: the divine indwelling.”¹³⁶ Grace enables a true interior change and permanent quality to our soul. This permanent quality, which is habitual, is continuously possessed and needed only once unless it is lost through sin.¹³⁷

¹³² Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 110 a. 1.

¹³³ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 20 a. 2.

¹³⁴ Journet, *The Meaning of Grace*, 19.

¹³⁵ Journet, *The Meaning of Grace*, 19.

¹³⁶ Mullady, *Grace Explained*, 87.

¹³⁷ Spezzano, *The Glory of God’s Grace*, 124.

The Relationship between Grace and Our Human Nature

Because habitual grace sanctifies and elevates our very nature, it is essential to recognize how this marvelous gift transforms us without substantially changing our nature. By way of approaching this important discussion, we shall employ the philosophical distinctions between substances and accidents to support our comprehension of the relationship between grace and nature.

Substances fundamentally comprise of natural things that exist in their own right. They do not exist in or within something in order to exist, as a color would. Accidents must exist in something in order to exist at all. Accidents, then, are a kind of modification of a substance that exists in its own right. For example, natural beings such as plants, animals, and humans are substances in which accidents adhere which is “distinguished from accidental combinations of substances...that require other substances for their existence.”¹³⁸ For instance, the “red” in a red ink pen can only exist if it is *in* the pen. Additionally, health or sickness exist accidentally in a bodily substance, so that “the body remains the same in its substance, but has a different accidental qualitative way of existing.”¹³⁹ How then, can this understanding apply to the relationship between grace and our human nature?

Grace does not exist as either a substance or substantial form in us. Rather, it subsists as an accidental form of the soul.”¹⁴⁰ Grace is a qualitative accident that elevates our “whole being

¹³⁸ Mullady, *Grace Explained*, 85.

¹³⁹ Mullady, *Grace Explained*, 86.

¹⁴⁰ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 110 a. 2.

to make it proportionate to an end hitherto unknown to it, one that goes beyond our natural nature.”¹⁴¹ Rather than substantially changing our nature, grace transforms and gives a transcendent beauty to our soul.

Habitual Grace as Operative and Cooperative

Given this context of the transformative power of grace, we can now advance to how grace as habitual or auxiliary – mentioned in the previous chapter – are distinct between their operative and cooperative movements.¹⁴² When we speak of habitual grace working operatively, this alludes to the two-fold action that God Himself does in the soul: first, by healing the soul of the wounds that sin has caused it, and secondly, by elevating it to partake in His divine nature.¹⁴³ This divine initiative always comes first in the gratuitous gift of grace, by which the soul is justified.

In habitual cooperating grace, our soul is disposed to receiving the divine motion that enables us to conform ourselves to the divine initiative.¹⁴⁴ When St. Thomas speaks of habitual cooperating grace, he describes the mind (*mens*) as “something that moves and is moved,” so that the operation is not only attributed to God, but also to us.¹⁴⁵ St. Thomas writes,

¹⁴¹ Journet, *The Meaning of Grace*, 20.

¹⁴² Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 1.

¹⁴³ Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 65.

¹⁴⁴ Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 65.

¹⁴⁵ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 2.

Now in both these ways grace is fittingly divided into operating and cooperating. For the operation of an effect is not attributed to the thing moved but to the mover. Hence in that effect in which our mind is moved and does not move, but in which God is the sole mover, the operation is attributed to God, and it is with reference to this that we speak of *operating grace*. But in that effect in which our mind both moves and is moved, the operation is not only attributed to God, but also to the soul; and it is with reference to this that we speak of cooperating grace.¹⁴⁶

Consequently, the good act we perform flows from our conformity with God's operative movement.¹⁴⁷

Auxilium as Operative and Cooperative

The grace of *auxilium* as operative is the movement God makes upon our volitional appetite which entices it to be moved.¹⁴⁸ When the grace of *auxilium* is cooperative, we freely use our will to “cooperate” with the divine will. St. Thomas, echoing the words of St. Augustine, maintains that “God does not justify us without ourselves, because while we are being justified we consent to God's justification.”¹⁴⁹ The gratuitous nature of *auxilium* as operative involves our volitional appetite being moved *interiorly* by God to the good. The grace of *auxilium* as cooperative involves our free command of the appropriate *exterior* act, or the outward action that can be seen. Hence, both movements are aided by God.¹⁵⁰ We must, then, “choose to listen and work with God's divine movement and employ all of our powers to cooperate with the

¹⁴⁶ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 2.

¹⁴⁷ Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 65.

¹⁴⁸ Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 65.

¹⁴⁹ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 2 ad. 2.

¹⁵⁰ Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 66.

qualitative change in the soul.”¹⁵¹ The more we come to cooperate with the movements of God in our soul which influences our external acts, the more we allow for the seed of glory to increase.¹⁵²

Because of God’s infinite holiness and glory, the work of grace in our soul never comes to completion in this life; the intensity of grace can always deepen in our soul so that there “will be as many *auxilia* as there are good acts done in the state of grace that further the progress to God as end,” so that we find ourselves as true recipients of grace upon grace (cf. John 1:16).¹⁵³ When *auxilia* is operative, it will “provide good intention and perseverance to the one in the state of grace,” which means that the soul will be moved to pure intentions and persevere when tempted by the evil one.¹⁵⁴ As cooperative, *auxilia* works insofar that it assists the soul to find the prudent means for realizing the end by which the operative *auxilia* has moved him, and orienting him to execute the exterior act. But what if we find ourselves out of the state of grace? How does the grace of *auxilium* come to our aid? Ought we to assume that auxiliary grace works in the same way for souls in the state of grace and out of grace?

¹⁵¹ Mullady, *Grace Explained*, 91.

¹⁵² Mullady, *Grace Explained*, 91.

¹⁵³ Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 67.

¹⁵⁴ Wawrykow, “Grace and Gratuitous Graces,” 67.

Further Inquiry on the Role of Auxiliary Grace in the Soul

With this inquiry, we shall summarize three ways by which *auxilium* operates in both cases that will better situate us to probe our query of how *auxilium* operates for a soul out of grace:

[First, *auxilium*] disposes the soul for the reception of the infused habits either when the soul has never possessed them or when the soul has lost them through mortal sin. In the latter case, [*auxilium*] will stimulate repentance for one's sins, the fear of punishment, and confidence in the divine mercy. [Second,] to activate the infused virtues, and if the individual is in the state of sanctifying grace (for faith and hope can exist without grace), the actuation perfects the infused virtues and is meritorious of increase and growth in the supernatural life. [Third,] to prevent the loss of sanctifying grace and the infused virtues through mortal sin. It implies a strengthening in the face of temptations, an awareness of special dangers, mortification of passions, and inspiration through good thoughts and holy desires.¹⁵⁵

Applying this understanding to a soul that is in the state of sin, the divine initiative sends *auxilium*, which inclines the will to be moved insofar that it can be moved.¹⁵⁶ If this movement is received, which either flows from attrition or love for God, justification is effected when the soul deliberately turns away from sin and looks to God.¹⁵⁷ Towards the end of this process by which *auxilium* has supplied an inclination for the will to turn to God, God infuses habitual grace. From this view, habitual grace is operative and becomes "susceptible to growth and augmented when the soul acts out of this grace and the theological virtues given with it," and accomplished through co-operative habitual grace.¹⁵⁸ The function of *auxilium* is evident as it stimulates

¹⁵⁵ Aumann, *Spiritual Theology*, 79.

¹⁵⁶ Wawrykow, "Grace and Gratuitous Graces," 66.

¹⁵⁷ Wawrykow, "Grace and Gratuitous Graces," 66.

¹⁵⁸ Wawrykow, "Grace and Gratuitous Graces," 66.

repentance in the soul that leads to conversion and ends in the disposition of habitual grace, which allows the soul to partake of the divine nature.

“The Spirit Aids Us in Our Weakness”

Thus, *gratia gratum faciens* is an habitual and stable disposition habit which mediates the divine life to man’s created nature and infuses the virtues that are perfected by the Holy Spirit. God gives us a “principle of action” by which our powers of knowing and loving are supernaturalized through the Holy Spirit who is given to us.¹⁵⁹ By charity, we enjoy intentional union with God, which divinizes our soul. Because charity is the substance of Christian perfection, it is the greatest of virtues and the form by which the rest of the virtues are brought to their term.¹⁶⁰ When the grace of the Holy Spirit comes into our souls, this divine guest brings with him other gifts that enable us to act on a supernatural level. That is to say, the gifts that flow from *gratia gratum faciens* – wisdom, counsel, understanding, knowledge, fortitude, piety, and fear of the Lord – elevate our human actions. Living habitually in the state of grace allows the Holy Spirit to sensitize and provoke us to respond to his inner promptings.¹⁶¹ The Spirit’s divine movement, which is in constant motion, brings us more deeply into communion with the Father and Son, by whom we are made fully alive.

¹⁵⁹ Torrell, *Spiritual Master*, 182.

¹⁶⁰ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 110 a. 4 ad. 1 and q. 111 a. 5.

¹⁶¹ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 68 a. 4.

We are enriched in every way through grace that God gratuitously gives through Christ (1 Corinthians 1:4). The role of the Holy Spirit, then, is precisely to “establish the ‘continuity’ between Christ the Head and the faithful members.”¹⁶² That is, the Holy Spirit “assumes in the ecclesial body the role of the soul in the human body” and is the source of holiness from which all “supernatural activity” is enlivened.¹⁶³ The Holy Spirit is at the heart of charity which flows in the Church and links members together to form the Body of Christ. It is fundamentally important, then, that each member strives for unity which is crucially important for the fecundity of the Church.

Conclusion

The gift of *gratia gratum faciens*, which encompasses the grace of the Holy Spirit that Christ mediates to us, reveals the munificent love that God offers and extends to all of us so that we may have life abundantly in him. To this end, God gives “grace upon grace” in its fullness (cf. John 1:16) and sends his Holy Spirit, who is given as a divine guest to our souls. When the Holy Spirit indwells our souls, he plays a “role of unification in love at the heart of the Church...and thus creates from the assembly of the baptized a communion of love in the image of its Trinitarian source.”¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Torrell, *Spiritual Master*, 189.

¹⁶³ Torrell, *Spiritual Master*, 190.

¹⁶⁴ Torrell, *Spiritual Master*, 188.

We now turn our attention to the other gifts of grace that God offers to his Church that strengthen this bond of communion and unity. Distinguished from *gratia gratum faciens*, *gratia gratis data* is given to one to orient others to their salvation. Because the Body of Christ was uniquely forged through the event of Pentecost by the coming of the Holy Spirit to each of the Apostles, we will consider how the role of *gratiae gratis datae*, or the *charismatōn*, animates the life of the Church.

CHAPTER III:
THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND *GRATIAE GRATIS DATAE* IN THE BODY OF
CHRIST

Following the remarkable event of Pentecost, we can observe how the external power of the Holy Spirit was manifested in the Church from her earliest beginnings. These external manifestations of the Spirit that continued through the Church are addressed in the writings of St. Paul, who referred to these gifts as the *charismatōn*. His writings emphasize how profitable these gifts are when they are implemented in the life of the Church. We will proceed in our inquiry of *gratiae gratis datae* by first understanding the effect of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Secondly, we will establish what role the *charismatōn* served in the wider context of the Church through St. Paul's exhortation to the Romans, Ephesians, and Corinthians on these transcendent gifts of grace. This contextualization will equip us with the necessary understanding to advance to the writings of St. Thomas on *gratiae gratis datae*.

Faithful to St. Paul and his teachings, St. Thomas labors to formulate what value each of these extraordinary gifts have as he enunciates key insights into *gratiae gratis datae*. While he cogently establishes that *gratiae gratis datae* are inferior to *gratia gratum faciens*, St. Thomas simultaneously and meticulously demonstrates how these gifts dynamically manifest the power of God through others. After first examining his commentary on St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, we will progress to St. Thomas's writings on the particular gifts pertaining to *gratia gratis data*. These writings warrant our attention because *gratiae gratis datae* magnify the power of God and increases the praise that is due to him. This is perhaps the main reason why, as we shall see, St. Thomas urges us to exercise these gifts, since they are ordered to the perfection of the Church.

The Power and Presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church Following Pentecost

The beginning of the Acts of the Apostles reveals the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in the early Church, unveiling the distinct and crucial aspect that the Spirit plays in the Apostles' commission to preach the Gospel to all nations (cf. Matthew 28:18-20). As the Apostles, the Mother of Jesus, and the brethren of Christ were praying in the upper room, a sound suddenly occurred, coming "from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4). The gift of the Spirit is what compelled all of them to proclaim and demonstrate the Gospel.

The profound manifestation of the Holy Spirit also fulfills John the Baptist's foretelling that the one coming after him would baptize with the Holy Spirit (cf. Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:15-18; John 1:33). Through the immersion of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the Apostles in particular were enabled to recall all the things that Christ taught (cf. John 14:26), and in which human testimony of Christ would "find its strongest support."¹⁶⁵ While the Apostles were breathed upon by Christ on the evening of the Resurrection and were told, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22), it was not until the event of Pentecost that the power of the Holy Spirit was uniquely manifested in them. The Apostles were invigorated and enlivened by Christ's Resurrection and the gift of His Spirit at Pentecost to give their lives whole-heartedly to preaching the Gospel; they experienced an energy to fulfill the mission entrusted to them:

¹⁶⁵ John Paul II (Karol Wojtyła), *Dominum Et Vivificantem: Encyclical Letter On the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World* (St. Paul Publications, 1986), 5. https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_18051986_dominum-et-vivificantem.html.

[Pentecost] is the definitive manifestation of what had already been accomplished in the same Upper Room on Easter Sunday. The Risen Christ came and ‘brought’ to the Apostles the Holy Spirit. He gave him to them, saying ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’ What had then taken place *inside the Upper Room*, ‘the doors being shut,’ later, on the day of Pentecost is manifested also outside, in public. The doors of the Upper Room are opened, and the Apostles go to the inhabitants and the pilgrims who had gathered in Jerusalem on the occasion of the feast, in order to bear witness to Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. In this way the prediction is fulfilled: ‘He will bear witness to me: and *you also* are witnesses, because you have been with me from the beginning.’¹⁶⁶

The same Holy Spirit that imbued the soul of Christ also impels the Apostles and all those who receive His Spirit to accomplish the salvific mission that was given by the Father to Christ. The Spirit’s descent at Pentecost was a public manifestation of divine power which would continually animate the Church as she entered into the work entrusted to her by Christ.

The “First” Body of Christ and the *Charismatōn*

The event of Pentecost also strengthened the ties of communion (*koinōnia*) within the first Christian community, that is, the Apostles.¹⁶⁷ Prior to this event, the Apostles had been formed, counselled, and strengthened in their journeys with Christ, but with the event of Pentecost, their rooted identity as followers of Christ enabled them to carry out their mission. In this sense, the first “Body of Christ” was founded. This essential theme is foundational as St. Paul contextualizes the *charismatōn* within the corporate Body and labors to show how each

¹⁶⁶ John Paul II, *Dominum Et Vivificantem*, 25; 40-41.

¹⁶⁷ McDonnell and Montague, *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 28-29.

member is necessary to its vitality and unity. The *charismatōn*, which is at the service of the Body of Christ, exist to perfect these components. Just as Christ formed the first community of Apostles and strengthened them as brothers through His Spirit, so too does St. Paul seek to strengthen the Church in his exhortation on the *charismatōn*.

The Role of the Charismatōn in the Body of Christ

The *charismatōn* have undoubtedly a “dynamic quality in St. Paul’s teachings” which are purposed for strengthening unity and edifying the Body of Christ.¹⁶⁸ In his writings, St. Paul strains between “two different terms to refer to spiritual gifts: *Pneumatika* for ‘gifts of the Spirit,’ and *charismatōn* for ‘gifts of grace’ which come from the same Spirit.”¹⁶⁹ *Charismatōn*, which derives from *charis*, meaning “gift,” are “etymologically dependent upon *charis*,” which indicate the efficient power or principle of the Spirit working through the *charismatōn*.¹⁷⁰ These gifts include the utterance of wisdom and knowledge, faith, healing, the working of miracles, prophecy, discernment of spirits, tongues, and interpretation of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:8-10).

¹⁶⁸ Edmund J. Fortman, ed. *The Theology of Man and Grace: Commentary: Readings in the Theology of Grace* (Milwaukee: Bruce Pub, 1966), 59. Additionally, the term *charisma* is also used. Fortman also goes on to say that “Grace has undoubtedly an immanent and dynamical quality in Saint Paul’s teaching, but that at the same time, when he thinks of the power which is at work in Christians, he speaks of the Spirit rather than of ‘grace.’ When he speaks of the latter, while he has in mind the effects which spring from the operation of grace on the Christian soul, he thinks even more primarily of the unmerited love of which Christians are the objects. The fact that he does not call it *charis* when this term lay so close to his hand in connection with the *charismata* is strong evidence that Saint Paul meant by the grace of God something prior to, and conditioning, the energy of all ‘grace-gifts.’”

¹⁶⁹ Michael J. Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord: A Theological Introduction to Paul and His Letters* (United Kingdom: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016), 323. Gorman cites 1 Corinthians 12:1 and 14:1 where St. Paul uses the term, *pneumatika* to refer to the spiritual gifts. He also cites 1 Corinthians 12:4, 9, 28, 30, and 31 where St. Paul refers to the spiritual gifts as the *charismatōn*.

¹⁷⁰ Fortman, *The Theology of Man and Grace*, 59.

While these particular gifts are listed in his First letter to the Corinthians, they are meant to be representative among all of the *charismatōn*. For St. Paul, the *charismatōn* denote “extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit which are designed for the common good of the Church,” especially the gift of prophecy, which is given primacy in his letters.¹⁷¹

St. Paul labors to “strengthen, sanctify, and unify the community” which the mediation of the Holy Spirit makes possible in the body of believers.¹⁷² The Spirit “essentially distinguishes the believer from the nonbeliever; the Spirit is what especially marks the beginning of Christian life; the Spirit above all is what makes a person a child of God.”¹⁷³ For St. Paul, the reception of the Spirit is the *sine qua non* of Christian life, that is, a necessary component to the unification of the Body of Christ. In his effort to illustrate the organic nature of this unity, St. Paul applies a literal image of a human body.¹⁷⁴ The head, which stands for Christ, is distinguished from the other parts of the body, which represent the members of the Church. This imagery expresses the importance of all the members that form the body in its unified diversity in four ways. The first incorporates bodily unity in diversity, while the second entails the necessity of each believer. The

¹⁷¹ Fortman, *The Theology of Man and Grace*, 63.

¹⁷² Michael J. Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord*, 282. Gorman explains that divisions ensued on various lines. Some “aligned themselves with one apostolic figure or another, whether it was Paul himself, Apollos, or Peter. Other divisions also appeared, such as taking fellow believers to court (see Acts 6:1-11). Some avoided the idol temples completely, while others ate within their precincts and may have mocked the scruples of others (see Acts 8:1-13). Some treated the gatherings for the Lord’s Supper like a dinner party for the wealthy and neglected the poor latecomers (Acts 11:17-34). Still others looked down on certain members of the community, especially those who did not possess the more spectacular endowments of the Spirit like glossolalia – speaking in tongues.

¹⁷³ Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub, 1987), 603.

¹⁷⁴ Daniel A. Madigan. “The Body of Christ: 1 Corinthians 11:23–27 and 12:12–13, 27.” In *Communicating the Word: Revelation, Translation, and Interpretation in Christianity and Islam* (ed. by Marshall David; DC: Georgetown University Press, 2011), 84. Michael Gorman also makes note in *Apostle of the Crucified Lord* that the language used was “commonly used in an antiquity as a metaphor for community,” that is, an image used to represent a community of ancient times.” See page 323.

body, though one, is at the same time diverse, which causes each body parts and functions to rely upon one another.¹⁷⁵ The third is the interdependence of the parts in relation to one another, while the fourth comprises the weak and less respectable members which are due greater honor.¹⁷⁶

St. Paul asserts in correlating the physical body to a mystical one that all members in the Church are necessary for one another. A single missing member would negatively encumber the other parts of the body, thus causing it to suffer. The Holy Spirit, as given by Christ to his Church, is the source of unity and life in the body. In addition to the sanctifying gift of grace that is infused in believers by virtue of their baptism, the *charismatōn* are also distributed which are intended for the members to use in service to the other. The role of the *charismatōn* in the life of the Body of Christ, then, cannot be underestimated.

Senses of the Charismatōn at the Service of the Body of Christ

Considering the *charismatōn* as an effective means for unity and fortification, we can observe four senses – eschatological, ecclesial, vocational, and egalitarian – in order to more keenly grasp St. Paul’s exhortation of the *charismatōn* to the body of believers.¹⁷⁷ In the eschatological lens, we can perceive how St. Paul’s encouragement to use the spiritual gifts are part of his method to prepare believers to welcome the second coming of Christ. Hence, the

¹⁷⁵ Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord*, 324.

¹⁷⁶ Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord*, 325.

¹⁷⁷ Peter Alan Stuart, “Charism in the Light of Scripture” *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 47 (2012): 330-332.

charismatōn act as signposts that orient others to the eschatological reality.¹⁷⁸ In context of the ecclesial sense, the *charismatōn* are set within the corporate interdependent life of the Body of Christ, that is, the governing body of the Church, signaling that they must be exercised to the hierarchical authority instituted by Christ. Thirdly, the *charismatōn* can be examined on the vocational level. Because the *charismatōn* are gifts which embody “a call to exercise” in order to build up the Body of Christ, a choice is posed to respond to that summons.¹⁷⁹ The vocational sense, then, is a discernment of how we as believers might readily dispose ourselves to the work of the Holy Spirit. Lastly, the egalitarian sense can help us understand that one who has a spiritual gift does not necessarily subject others to him. That is, no *charisma* makes one more “worthy than another, and all members of the Body are to be equally respected and honored” despite whatever charisma they exercise.¹⁸⁰ These four senses of the *charismatōn* can accompany the consideration St. Paul pays to the *charismatōn* since the “intent of individual giftedness...cannot lie in individualism but always points to the higher goal of the corporate body in togetherness.”¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ Stuart, “Charism in the Light of Scripture,” 330.

¹⁷⁹ Stuart, “Charism in the Light of Scripture,” 330.

¹⁸⁰ Stuart notes that the one exception to this statement is the gift of tongues, to which Paul prefers the gift of prophecy).

¹⁸¹ Siegfried S. Schatzmann, *A Pauline Theology of Charismata* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1987), 68.

Saint Paul's Letter to the Ephesians

With this wider context of the *charismatōn* in place, we can now progress to the specific teachings of St. Paul in Scripture. In his letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul expounds upon the dynamic relationship between the Trinity and the *charismatōn*:

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift; And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ..." (Ephesians 4:4-7; 11-13)

This passage insists that believers, who have been given access into the Body of Christ, are endowed with the *charismatōn* according to the will of God while granting that not all members have the same spiritual gifts. Some members are entrusted with authority, while others are called to teach and preach. The members of the body must therefore cooperate with the specific calling in the context of a united Body of Christ.

Another noteworthy aspect is the way St. Paul draws out the relationship between the *charismatōn* and the mission of the Church. These spiritual gifts are to be "representative, not exhaustive, with emphasis on preaching and teaching the Gospel."¹⁸² Again, a unified Body of Christ as St. Paul sees it furthers the Church's mission to "equip the saints" (cf. Ephesians 4:12).

¹⁸² Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord*, 597.

Saint Paul's Letter to the Romans

St. Paul's exhortation to the Romans emphasizes the importance of unity, which can effectively draw even non-believers into the life of the Church:

For by the grace given to me I bid everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith which God has assigned him. For as in one body, we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. (Romans 12:3-8)

By living in "sober judgment," unity within a diversity of members with gifts can be realized. St. Paul stresses here a "unity in diversity, as well as the interdependence and mutual belonging of the various members of the body."¹⁸³ This is evident since much of St. Paul's letter to the Romans largely surrounds justification, faith and works, and his desire to reach both the Gentile and Jewish believers alike.¹⁸⁴ He also again stresses the importance that one must exercise his spiritual gifts responsibly and in prudence, since such acts are representative of both God and his Church. Similar to his address to the Ephesians, the list of spiritual gifts that St. Paul addresses with the Romans is not exhaustive, but rather exemplifies the variety of ways that others may serve the good of the Church.

¹⁸³ Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord*, 457.

¹⁸⁴ Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord*, 397.

Saint Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians

Analogous to his letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul notably situates the *charismatōn* in relation to the Holy Spirit, which enables him to clearly indicate the work of the Spirit in an individual soul, which is at the same time the work of the triune God:

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. (1 Corinthians 12:4-11)

The “divine community of unity-in-diversity” supplies the “model for how the members of the Corinth Church may share in divine life.”¹⁸⁵ For St. Paul, the *charismatōn* must have unity and edification as its aim. The Body of Christ is pivotal for this goal which must respect diversity:

If the source and goal of charismata depict the aspect of unity plainly, the equally emphasized aspect of diversity of gifts for service lends a certain mystery to the unity of the whole. Diversity of gifts occupied Paul's paraenesis throughout First Corinthians 12-14...in order to correct the false sense of spiritual unity perpetrated by the Corinthian ‘monopolizers’ of ecstatic utterances. Paul's various random listings of charismata reflect diversity *par excellence*. In fact, the unity of the experience of grace is enhanced by the diversity of the gifts bestowed and shared in service...diversity of charismata, therefore, does not destroy the unity of the Church. The opposite is true: namely, the unity of the church is contingent upon the proper functioning of the whole range of diverse charismata; without the diversity of the charismata there can be no unity.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord*, 324.

¹⁸⁶ Schatzmann, *A Pauline Theology of Charismata*, 72.

St. Paul particularly highlights that the gifts are not given to the elite but to those whom the Spirit wills. Moreover, the need for the variety of gifts “acknowledges the individuation of the *charismatōn* by the Spirit, the interdependence of the diverse gifts with respect to its Giver, and with respect to the other gifted members individually and corporately.”¹⁸⁷ Without diversity, it is unreasonable to expect that believers and non-believers alike can be reached. Furthermore, the lack of diversity would dismiss the Trinitarian model that seems to animate the Pauline theology of the *charismatōn*: “the Spirit gives the gifts to the various members of the community (1 Corinthians 12:4, 7-11); Jesus, as the Lord and as the one whose body is constituted by the Church, is served (1 Corinthians 12:5); and God the Father activates the gifts” (1 Corinthians 12:6).¹⁸⁸ The *charismatōn*, then, are gifts from God that “unify and edify the Church, and must always therefore be publicly exercised in constructive, Christ-like love, and with an appropriate degree of order.”¹⁸⁹

St. Paul’s list of the *charismatōn* – particularly in his Letters to the Romans and First Corinthians – is intentionally ordered to emphasize certain spiritual gifts, even though all the *charismatōn* are ordered toward the unity and vitality of the Body of Christ. By deliberately listing wisdom and knowledge first, St. Paul subtly highlights how these gifts are more beneficial to the Body of Christ, as opposed to the spiritual gifts of tongues and the interpretation of

¹⁸⁷ Schatzmann, *A Pauline Theology of Charismata*, 72.

¹⁸⁸ Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord*, 324. St. Paul “repeatedly stresses that it is the one Spirit, the same triadic God, who is manifest in the various gifts.”

¹⁸⁹ Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord*, 323.

tongues which were held in high esteem by the Corinthians.¹⁹⁰ Moreover, St. Paul places primacy upon the gift of prophecy for the way it attests to the divine power of God (cf. 1 Corinthians 14:1).

The Primacy of Prophecy

Notably, St. Paul labors to convey prophecy as the preferable gratuitous gift, teaching that “he who prophesies speaks to men for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation...for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the Church may be edified” (1 Corinthians 14:3; 5). Prophecy is the gift that enables one to speak on behalf of God Himself, which may also consist in foretelling future events.¹⁹¹ It is an utterance of a word or phrase inspired by God which is ordered toward the encouragement, exhortation, edification, and correction of others.¹⁹² For St. Paul, prophecy is “a gift of the Spirit integral to the life of the Church.”¹⁹³ It necessitates active listeners within the Body of Christ, and when speaking, to speak in such a way that those who listened could be confident in the Spirit of God moving.

¹⁹⁰ Walter Taylor, “1 Corinthians: Life in the Body,” In *Paul: Apostle to the Nations, An Introduction* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2012), 181.

¹⁹¹ Raymond F. Collins and Daniel Harrington, *First Corinthians* (United States: Liturgical Press, 1999), 491.

¹⁹² Eugene Boring, *An Introduction to the New Testament: History, Literature, Theology* (Westminster: John Knox Press, 2012), 250.

¹⁹³ Collins and Harrington, *First Corinthians*, 490.

St. Paul was convicted that prophecy helped unbelievers, or those outside the Church, draw others to the Christian faith, whereas tongues could divert unbelievers away from the Church as a result of confusion or misunderstanding with tongues.¹⁹⁴ In this way, St. Paul believed that the charism of prophecy was more important for the edification of the Church of Corinth and was careful to make distinctions between prophecy and tongues. Tongues was a speech that subjected itself to being mysterious and sometimes unable to be understood by others. When referring to tongues, it seems that St. Paul is alluding to a certain form of tongues called “glossolalia,” which is the use of words and sounds that do not belong to an existing language. This is exemplified as he writes, “One who speaks in a tongue does not speak to human beings but to God...if you, because of speaking in tongues, do not utter intelligible speech, how will anyone know what is being said? For you will be talking to the air” (1 Corinthians 14:2; 9).¹⁹⁵ The other form of tongues seems to be xenolalia, which is a true human language that is spoken without prior knowledge or learning.¹⁹⁶ St. Paul’s references to the gift of tongues denotes glossolalia.

Because of the Church’s mission to teach and preach the Gospel, prophecy is rendered more advantageous than the gift of tongues since it is “understandable and edifying to others.”¹⁹⁷ For this reason, St. Paul emphasizes the importance of prophecy over tongues since it is more closely ordered toward the Church’s edification. While St. Paul still recognizes tongues as a gift,

¹⁹⁴ Boring, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 251.

¹⁹⁵ William Newton, “The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Through the Eyes of St. Thomas Aquinas,” in *The Downside Review* 137 (2019): 36.

¹⁹⁶ Newton, “The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Through the Eyes of St. Thomas Aquinas,” 36.

¹⁹⁷ Collins and Harrington, *First Corinthians*, 491.

he still nevertheless sees that the gift of prophecy is more advantageous to the Church.¹⁹⁸ The primacy of prophecy will play a vital role in the teachings of St. Thomas, as he reflects upon the writings of St. Paul and its role in perfecting the Church.

The Commentary of Saint Thomas on First Corinthians and the Division of the Gratuitous Graces

By appraising St. Paul's division of the *charismatōn* in Scripture, we are more sufficiently supplied to engage in the theological exposition that St. Thomas provides in his commentary on First Corinthians. Because of his close consideration, St. Thomas categorizes *gratiae gratis datae* according to knowledge, action, and speech. This categorization will specifically aid us as we address the question of how *gratiae gratis datae* outwardly persuade others and thus orient others to God.¹⁹⁹

However, it would be unbecoming to consider these gifts without acknowledging the personal importance they must have had for St. Thomas, given the nature of his religious vocation to the Dominican Order. With the gifts of preaching and teaching that had been endowed upon this Religious Order as a means to convey the light of truth, we would be amiss not to realize that St. Thomas must have thought how these gifts *gratis datae* enabled the work of

¹⁹⁸ Collins and Harrington, *First Corinthians*, 493.

¹⁹⁹ Thomas Aquinas. *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians* (trans. by Fabian R. Larcher, John Mortensen, Daniel A. Keating, and Alarcón Enrique; Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute for the Study of Sacred Doctrine, 2012), 12:727. Thomas writes, "It is required to take the distinction in the sense that by one the salvation of others can be procured. Man, indeed, cannot do this by working within, for this belongs to God, but only by persuading outwardly."

the Dominican Order to flourish. St. Thomas must have reflected upon the personal gifts of grace of his Dominican founder – St. Dominic – as he engaged his faculties of reason in his theological discussion of *gratiae gratis datae*.

The Division of *Gratiae Gratis Datae*

As St. Thomas categorizes the spiritual gifts, he asserts the importance of and why it is gravely important for them to be confirmed. He insists, “First, a man must possess the knowledge of Divine things, to be capable of teaching others. Secondly, he must be able to confirm or prove what he says, otherwise his words have no weight. Thirdly, he must be capable of fittingly presenting to his hearers what he knows.”²⁰⁰

Knowledge

Under knowledge, St. Thomas sub-categorizes the gifts of faith, the word of wisdom, and the word of knowledge.²⁰¹ He alleges that these gifts are useful for the faculty of persuading, which requires that one have the skill in “conclusions and certitude of principles in regard to those matters in which he ought to persuade.”²⁰² Faith as a gratuitous gift is distinct from the

²⁰⁰ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 4.

²⁰¹ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 4.

²⁰² Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*, ed. Larcher, et al., 12:727.

theological virtue of faith due to its utilization for instructing others in the faith. As a gratuitous gift, faith is the “supereminent certitude whereby a man is fitted for instructing others concerning such things that belong to the faith.”²⁰³ The word of wisdom and the word of knowledge – as gratuitous gifts of grace distinct from the gifts of the Holy Spirit – assists one in the instruction of others so that they may overpower adversaries. In other words, wisdom and knowledge as gratuitous gifts enable one to instruct others and defeat objections raised by opponents.²⁰⁴ The word of wisdom particularly “persuades one in things pertaining to the knowledge of divine things and regards the principal conclusions known through their highest causes.”²⁰⁵ The word of knowledge is particularly given so that the things of God may be manifested to others. To this knowledge is “attributed that by which the holy faith is defended and strengthened.”²⁰⁶ The gifts of faith, the word of wisdom and word of knowledge, then, assist one to instruct another in Divine things beyond the scope of natural reason.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 4 ad. 2.

²⁰⁴ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 4 ad. 4. Thomas says that “wisdom and knowledge are not numbered among the gratuitous graces in the same way as they are reckoned among the gifts of the Holy Spirit, inasmuch as man’s mind is rendered easily movable by the Holy Spirit to the things of wisdom and knowledge...they are numbered amongst the gratuitous graces, inasmuch as they imply such a fullness of knowledge and wisdom that a man may not merely think aright of Divine things, but may instruct others and overpower adversaries.” The gifts of wisdom and knowledge *gratis data* is given for the sake of others, while the gifts of wisdom and knowledge in *gratia gratum faciens* is for the individual’s perfection.

²⁰⁵ Garrigou-Lagrange, *Grace*, 155.

²⁰⁶ Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*, ed. Larcher, et al., 12:727.

²⁰⁷ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 4.

Action

Teaching is most effective when it is confirmed by action since matters of salvation often cannot be confirmed or validated by reason. These gifts are ordered toward “confirming the revelation of divine things” so that words are accompanied by works.²⁰⁸ Because the matter of salvation transcends human reason, the gratuitous gifts of miracles, healing, prophecy, and discernment of spirits are subcategorized under action, because these gifts confirm persuasion.²⁰⁹ St. Thomas maintains that the “confirmation of such things as are within reason rests upon arguments; but the confirmation of what is above reason rests on what is proper to the Divine power.”²¹⁰

There are two examples by which Divine power is manifested operatively in the gifts of healing and the working of miracles:

First, when the teacher of sacred doctrine does what God alone can do, in miraculous deeds, whether with respect to bodily health – and thus there is the ‘grace of healing,’ or merely for the purpose of manifesting the Divine power; for instance, that the sun should stand still or darken, or that the sea should be divided – and thus there is the ‘working of miracles.’²¹¹

Miracles can be wrought by one who is in a state of grace and even one not in a state of grace. For example, “a sinner, in whom the Holy Spirit does not dwell, works miracles to show that the faith of the Church which he professes is true.”²¹² Again, manifestations of supernatural

²⁰⁸ Garrigou-Lagrange, *Grace*, 155.

²⁰⁹ Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*, ed. Larcher, et al., 12:728.

²¹⁰ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 4.

²¹¹ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 4.

²¹² Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*, ed. Larcher, et al., 12:725.

power are not dependent on the holiness of any person, because God is the first mover of all things, and thus the “first cause creating actions.”²¹³ Therefore, the power of the Spirit never has to depend upon one’s state of soul. God bears “witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his own will” (Hebrews 2:4). If someone is not in the state of grace, but invokes the power of the Spirit for another’s good, then the work testifies to God who is the cause of the work.

From a different angle, however, we may consider one who is in a state of grace that performs miracles. For instance, Stephen, who was full of “grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people” (Acts 6:8). In this way, miracles can be demonstrated through those who live a holy life. Whether one who is in the state of grace or out of the state of grace, however, has no bearing on whether God is the causal mover at work. The one through whom God acts is merely a conduit of his grace.

The gift of healing manifests God’s benignity towards those who suffer bodily illness and infirmity, while the working of miracles reveals the omnipotence of God by manifesting power beyond our natural capabilities.²¹⁴ Rather than lumping healing with miracles, St. Thomas distinguishes healing by its “special reason for inducing one to the faith, since a man is all the more ready to believe when he has received the gift of bodily health through the virtue of faith.”²¹⁵

²¹³ Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*, ed. Larcher, et al., 12:723.

²¹⁴ Garrigou-Lagrange, *Grace*, 156.

²¹⁵ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 4 ad. 3.

The gifts of prophecy and discernment of spirits are a kind of supernatural knowing. These gifts contribute to manifesting “what God alone can know, and these are either future contingents – and thus there is ‘prophecy,’ or also the secrets of hearts – and thus there is the ‘discerning of spirits.’”²¹⁶ These two gifts, then, give the ability for things to be known that would otherwise be naturally impossible to know without divine intervention.

Speech

Lastly, the gifts of tongues and the interpretation of tongues fall under the category of speech, since these gifts pertain to facilitating the word of God and conveying its meaning to its listeners.²¹⁷ In speaking of the gift of tongues, St. Thomas only uses the sense of tongues in his writings as xenolalia, which affords one the ability to speak in different languages without necessarily going through the process of learning it.²¹⁸ In this way, St. Thomas posits the gift as the capability of speaking which regards “either the idiom in which a person can be understood, and thus there are ‘kinds of tongues,’ or regard the sense of what is said, and thus there is the interpretation of speeches.”²¹⁹ St. Thomas seems to think that the occurrence of the gift of tongues “waned as the need receded.”²²⁰ Also within the categorization of speech, the

²¹⁶ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 4.

²¹⁷ Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*, ed. Larcher, et al., 12:727; cf. Aquinas, *ST I-II* q. 111 a. 4.

²¹⁸ Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*, ed. Larcher, et al., 12:729.

²¹⁹ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 4.

²²⁰ Newton, “The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Through the Eyes of St. Thomas Aquinas,” 36.

interpretation of speech is iterated as the other gift that gives one the ability to interpret passages difficult to penetrate and making it possible to understand.²²¹

These categorizations of the gratuitous graces into knowledge, action, and speech, are a means to better understand the manifestations of the Spirit at work for the common good in St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians. They are distributed "to each according to the measure of Christ's gift... for the praise and glory of God's name and edification of his Church (Ephesians 4:7; 16). But even this categorization leaves our intellectual inquiry into the essence of *gratia gratis data* still unsatisfied. If we are to give thanks to God for the particular gifts of grace he has bestowed upon the Church for both its disposal and advantage,²²² what can we further learn of *gratiae gratis datae* from St. Thomas in the *Summa Theologiae*?

The *Summa Theologiae* on *Gratiae Gratis Datae*

The exposition of St. Thomas on *gratia gratis data* first provides us with a lucid understanding of the nature and end of *gratia gratis data*, which is sharply distinct from *gratia gratum faciens*. St. Thomas also offers clarification of the potential warning signals that could arise in associating spectacular manifestations of *gratia gratis data* with one's personal degree of sanctity. While, strictly speaking, *gratia gratis data* is not foundational and even unnecessary in terms of salvation, it still merits a certain theological inquiry, given the attention that St. Paul as

²²¹ Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*, ed. Larcher, et al., 12:729; Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 4.

²²² Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*, ed. Larcher, et al., 12:710. Thomas quotes Seneca in the book, *On Benefits*, who says "in order that man not be ungrateful to God, he should not be ignorant of [the] spiritual gifts."

an inspired writer of Scripture gave them. Further, the vigorous consideration of *gratia gratis data* that St. Thomas labors to write unmistakably and implicitly affirms that these graces are still useful to the Church, since they testify to the magnificent glory of God, from whom all good gifts come (cf. James 1:17).

Gratia gratis data is extended to one in order that another is “led to God, and is beyond the capability of human nature by itself.”²²³ The intrinsic nature of these gifts are supernatural “with respect to the mode of its production” and “substantial insofar that it is effective” without containing a seed of glory.²²⁴ In other words, *gratia gratis data* concerns “an effect which cannot be produced by a created cause in any manner or in any subject.”²²⁵ This grace is sharply distinct with *gratia gratum faciens*, which unites us immediately to God; it is substantially in accordance with its formal object, which is union with God, and is therefore the seed of glory.²²⁶ Nonetheless, *gratiae gratis datae* can orient others to *gratia gratum faciens*:

The peculiar gratuitousness of charismatic grace is related to its immediate purpose, which is not for the personal good, but for the good of the community. Consequently, charismatic grace [*gratia gratis data*] has the common name of grace, and sanctifying grace, the proper name. Only charity, united with sanctifying grace, possesses the full ratio of grace. Therefore, this division is based on the different purposes of sanctifying grace (habitual or perfect and actual or imperfect - the transitory aid that begins union with God) and charismatic grace [*gratia gratis data*].²²⁷

²²³ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 1.

²²⁴ Garrigou-Lagrange, *Grace*, 159.

²²⁵ Garrigou-Lagrange, *Grace*, 159.

²²⁶ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 109 a. 9; q. 110 a. 2; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Grace*, 159.

²²⁷ Pedro Fernández, “La Gracia Carismática En Santo Tomás de Aquino,” *Angelica* 60 (1983), 7.

*La gratuidad peculiar de la gracia carismática está en relación con su finalidad inmediata, que no es el bien personal, sino el bien de la comunidad. En consecuencia, la gracia carismática tiene el nombre común de la gracia, y la gracia santificante, el nombre propio. Solo la caridad, unida a la gracia santificante, posee la razón plena de la gracia. Por consiguiente, esta división se fundamenta en las finalidades diferentes de la gracia santificante (habitual o perfecta y actual o imperfecta - *auxilium transiens que incoa la unión con Dios*), y de la gracia carismática.*

Although it is very clear that the supernatural gifts of *gratiae gratis datae* have no sanctifying ramifications, they do have valuable implications for the Church. They are “ordained to the common good of the Church, which is ecclesiastical order, whereas sanctifying grace is ordained to the separate common good, which is God.”²²⁸ By way of analogy, St. Thomas contends that “a multitude has a double good; the first is in the multitude itself, which follows the order of the leader. The second is separate from the multitude, which is the good of the leader.”²²⁹ Being that the army is ordained to its leader who commands, the good of the leader is a separate common good. In this way, we can understand that *gratia gratis data* is ordered toward the common good of the Church, while *gratia gratum faciens* is ordered toward the separate common good, which is God.²³⁰ That is to say, *gratia gratum faciens* is more directly linked to salvation than *gratia gratis data*, which is intended to orient others to salvation. Adhering to another analogy, we can imagine the form of a fire that gives off heat. The heat “by which fire acts is not more estimable than the form of fire itself.”²³¹ That is to say, without sanctifying grace as the “form of fire” which makes salvation possible, we cannot hope that any other grace, or “heat,” would orient us to something that is absent. In other words, without sanctifying grace, which unites us to our ultimate good – God – the Church cannot hope to orient her members or others through *gratia gratis data* to their beatitude. God is our ultimate good,

²²⁸ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 5 ad. 1.

²²⁹ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 5 ad. 1.

²³⁰ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 5 ad. 1.

²³¹ Garrigou-Lagrange, *Grace*, 161.

and this good is superior to the common good of the Church. Beginning with the gift of prophecy, credited as the greatest gratuitous gift, St. Thomas – following St. Paul – shows what value this gift has to the common good of the Church as he proceeds in his analysis of each of the gifts *gratis datae*.

The Essence, Cause and Degrees of the Gift of Prophecy

For St. Thomas, the gift of prophecy is the foundational gratuitous gift which provides a basis for examining the other gifts *gratis datae*.²³² St. Thomas probes at the essence, cause, and degrees of the gift of prophecy which endows us to speak on behalf of God. The gift of prophecy is “a transient gift by which a human knows something that he has not learned by means of the senses, but rather by some divine activity on one of the cognitive powers of the soul.”²³³

St. Thomas rightly argues that prophecy is not a habit of the soul since it is not tied or implied by *gratia gratum faciens*.²³⁴ His examination of Scripture solidifies his stance that the gift of prophecy relies completely on the gracious will of God. Scripture and Tradition has it that prophecy is “only granted when and where the Holy Spirit wills it.”²³⁵ St. Thomas continues,

Now light may be in a subject in two ways: first, by way of an abiding form, as material light is in the sun, and in fire; secondly, by way of a passion, or passing impression, as light is in the air. Now the prophetic light is not in the prophet’s intellect by way of an abiding form, else a prophet would always be able to prophesy, which is clearly

²³² Bernard Blankenhorn, “The Metaphysics of Charisms: Thomas Aquinas, Biblical Exegesis and Pentecostal Theology,” *Angelicum* 91 (2014), 385.

²³³ Newton, “The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Through the Eyes of St. Thomas Aquinas,” 34.

²³⁴ Blankenhorn, “The Metaphysics of Charisms,” 394.

²³⁵ Blankenhorn, “The Metaphysics of Charisms,” 394.

false...the reason for this is that the intellectual light that is in a subject by way of an abiding and complete form, perfects the intellect chiefly to the effect of knowing the principle of the things manifested by that light; thus by the light of the active intellect the intellect knows chiefly the first principles of all things known naturally. Now the principle of things pertaining to supernatural knowledge, which are manifested by prophecy, is God Himself, Whom the prophets do not see in His essence, although He is seen by the blessed in heaven, in whom this light is by way of an abiding and complete form.²³⁶

By way of analogy, the gift of prophecy as an “extrinsic gift” is knowledge that “enters the students’ minds when the teacher decides to impart some new knowledge to the students.”²³⁷

The students do not know when new instruction will be imparted to them since this remains at the teacher’s discretion. Likewise, the prophet does not know when he will be enlightened by God. Hence, the prophetic gift is a passing gift. It is only present when the Spirit chooses to activate it.²³⁸

Receiving the Gift of Prophecy – A Divine Matter

Prophecy is knowledge of things pertaining to God’s revelation, whether it be that of hidden things or foreknowledge of the future. Recognizing the primacy of this gift in the Church,

²³⁶ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 171, a. 2. Newton also notes, “since prophecy is about knowledge, Aquinas reasonably applies his epistemology to assist in his understanding of it. A basic feature of this is that human knowledge is the confluence of a mental likeness of the thing known (called a species) and an intellectual light sufficient to make sense of this species. In one place, Aquinas styles these as ‘reception’ and ‘judgment.’ These species can be either sensible or intellectual. The sensible species can come to be in the recipient via the outer senses (Daniel saw the writing on the wall, Daniel 5:1ff) or might be impressed into the imagination directly by God (Jeremiah and the boiling pot, Jer 1:13ff). A third possibility is when God brings to mind an image already stored in the prophet’s memory or He joins together various sensible species already so stored.” See “The Catholic Charismatic Renewal through the Eyes of St. Thomas Aquinas,” 34-36.

²³⁷ Blankenhorn, “The Metaphysics of Charisms,” 394-395.

²³⁸ Blankenhorn, “The Metaphysics of Charisms,” 395; Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 171, a. 2.

St. Paul believed it was necessary in order to draw outsiders into the Church: “If all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you” (1 Corinthians 14:24-25). God, “who is the universal efficient cause, requires neither previous matter nor previous disposition of matter in His corporeal effects.”²³⁹ God can bring into being that which is necessary to cause things and therefore, can dispose us to receive the gift of prophecy: “He is able at the same time, by creation, to produce the subject, so as to dispose a soul for prophecy and give it prophetic grace.”²⁴⁰

Although our personal disposition to receive the gifts *gratis datae* was briefly considered in St. Thomas’ commentary on First Corinthians, we are now better equipped to more carefully pursue that same question. Can our state of soul, or disposition of soul, hinder our ability to exercise *gratiae gratis datae*? In order to adequately supply a response, we will approach this question with two distinct points of view. First, we will consider an upright life (or the state of grace) in “regard to its inward root, which is sanctifying grace.”²⁴¹ Secondly, we will deliberate upon the inward passions of the soul and the outward actions, or, put another way, how our passions can affect our actions.²⁴²

For the first, St. Thomas answers that sanctifying grace “is given chiefly in order that man’s soul be united to God by charity.”²⁴³ If such a person is endowed with the gift of

²³⁹ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 172, a. 3.

²⁴⁰ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 172, a. 3.

²⁴¹ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 172, a. 4.

²⁴² Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 172, a. 4.

²⁴³ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 172, a. 4.

prophecy, it seems that the gift can work more effectively, since an evil life could pose an impediment. However, gratuitous gifts do not necessarily depend on our interior disposition. Prophecy, which is numbered among gratuitous graces, is “given for the good of the Church...and not directly intended to unite man’s affections to God, which is the purpose of charity. Therefore, prophecy can be without a good life...”²⁴⁴ On the one hand, the gift of prophecy can be given for both the good of others and the enlightenment of the one who has received the gift. On the other hand, some receive the gift merely out of the good for another.

Secondly, however, two obstacles can negatively impose themselves upon our disposition for the gift of prophecy: the deprivation of all natural senses and strong passions. For instance, we might “be hindered from the act of prophesying by some very strong passion, whether of anger, or of concupiscence as in sexual promiscuousness.”²⁴⁵ While the divine power could remove these impediments, the gift of prophecy could very well be impeded:

If we consider a good life with regard to the passions of the soul, and external actions, from this point of view an evil life is an obstacle to prophecy. For prophecy requires the mind to be raised very high in order to contemplate spiritual things, and this is hindered by strong passions, and the inordinate pursuit of external things. Hence, we read of the sons of the prophets that they dwelt together with Elisha, leading a solitary life, as it were, lest worldly employment should be a hindrance to the gift of prophecy.²⁴⁶

We also may wonder if such hindrances could induce us to prophesy falsely, since Christ himself warned of false prophets who are inwardly ravenous wolves (cf. Matthew 7:15). To this,

²⁴⁴ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 172, a. 4.

²⁴⁵ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 172, a. 3 ad. 3.

²⁴⁶ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 172, a. 4 ad. 3.

we can take comfort in the fact that the gift of prophecy, which comes from God as its source, cannot be used to achieve an evil end:

Not all wicked men are ravenous wolves, but only those whose purpose is to injure others. For Chrysostom says that ‘Catholic teachers, though they be sinners, are called slaves of the flesh, but never ravening wolves, because they do not purpose the destruction of Christians.’ And since prophecy is directed to the good of others, it is manifest that such are false prophets, because they are not sent for this purpose by God.²⁴⁷

Gratiae gratis datae are not limited to those who live exemplary moral lives. Rather, these divine gifts are given to those whom God he sees fitting to “receive this or that gift.”²⁴⁸ In other words, while God freely bestows gratuitous and unmerited gifts on whomever he wills, he also grants his gratuitous gifts to those of us whom he judges best to give it.²⁴⁹ The gift of prophecy, then, is not given as a validation of personal sanctity. At the same time, however, the activation of prophecy can be hindered by a lack or absence of upright moral conduct.

²⁴⁷ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 172, a. 4 ad. 3.

²⁴⁸ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 172, a. 4 ad. 4.

²⁴⁹ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 172, a. 4 ad. 4. Aquinas also discusses the question as to whether prophecy can come from demons (*ST II-II*, q. 172, a. 5). In summary, “caution is needed with regard to foretelling, because, as Aquinas notes, prediction is possible when the causes at play are well known and the event is not contingent. He mentions demons forecasting a storm. Perhaps a demon could predict the outcome of a sports event from a superior knowledge of the parameters involved. Aquinas even speaks about the movement of the planets impressing into the human imagination some signs of future events that will be caused by these movements. He calls this ‘natural prophecy.’” However, this form of natural prophecy is distinct from “true prophecy.” See Newton, “The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Through the Eyes of St. Thomas Aquinas,” 34.

The Gifts of Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues, the Word of Wisdom, and the Word of Knowledge

The gifts of tongues and the interpretation of tongues are categorized under speech because they are ordered toward effective instruction – a necessary component to proclaiming the Gospel.²⁵⁰ These gifts are advantageous to the salvation of others since it provides one with eloquence and conviction that befits the power of the Gospel message. In order that one might understand what is being spoken to him in his own language, tongues is a fitting gift for us who proclaim the Gospel which assists us for presenting the Gospel to those who have either never heard it, or understand very little of it.²⁵¹ Hence, God granted the apostles the gift of tongues to persuade others in their own preaching of the Gospel. Otherwise, the apostles would not have been adequately equipped to preach the Gospel message if they had lacked the means to effectively communicate it. St. Thomas acknowledges that they would have been “poor and powerless; nor at the outset could they have easily found someone to interpret their words for them.”²⁵²

Under knowledge, the word of wisdom, and the word of knowledge are treated as gratuitous gifts attached to words.²⁵³ When the gifts of the Word of Wisdom and the Word of

²⁵⁰ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 176 a. 1.

²⁵¹ Aquinas, *ST II-II* q. 176 a. 2 ad. 4. Thomas treats both the gift of tongues and the gift of interpretation of speeches together. Thomas explains the interpretation of tongues as the enlightenment of the mind to “understand and explain any obscurities of speech arising either from a difficulty in the things signified, or from the words uttered being unknown, or from the figures of speech employed.”

²⁵² Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 176 a. 1.

²⁵³ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 177, a. 1, prol.

Knowledge are intelligible to the hearer, their effects of teaching, pleasing, and persuading, render them useful to those outside the Body of Christ.²⁵⁴ However, these two gifts differ from tongues precisely by their effectiveness:

Since the Holy Spirit does not fail in anything that pertains to the profit of the Church, he provides also the members of the Church with speech; to the effect that a man not only speaks so as to be understood by different people, which pertains to the gift of tongues, but also speaks with *effect*, and this pertains to the *grace of the word*.²⁵⁵

By eloquence of words, teaching proves useful as it can motivate attentiveness in others. Expressive speech that pleases its listeners bids due justice to the one speaking. Lastly, a teacher who, by example, witnesses the words that he speaks gains the respect of the audience. Again, these gifts profit and build up the Church, as St. Thomas notes that “the grace of the word of wisdom is given to a man for the profit of others.”²⁵⁶ These gratuitous gifts are useful when they remove obstacles that would impede one from *gratia gratum faciens*. However, these gifts could be withdrawn at times either through the fault of the hearer or the speaker...the works of either do not merit grace directly, but only remove the obstacles.”²⁵⁷ These gifts differ from the gifts of the Holy Spirit because they are merely for “instructing others and overpowering adversaries,” since it is “one thing to know what a man must believe in order to reach everlasting life, and another thing to know how this may benefit the godly and may be defended against the ungodly.”²⁵⁸

²⁵⁴ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 177 a. 1.

²⁵⁵ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 177 a. 1 [emphasis added].

²⁵⁶ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 177 a. 1 ad. 3.

²⁵⁷ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 177 a. 1 ad. 3.

²⁵⁸ Aquinas, *ST I-II*, q. 111 a. 4 ad. 4. Thomas quotes Augustine here when distinguishing between the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the gratuitous graces.

In comparison with the gift of prophecy, the gift of tongues and the gift of the word of wisdom and word of knowledge are inferior for three reasons: first, because prophecy is intelligible, unlike tongues, and because it consists in “the mind itself being enlightened so as to know an intelligible truth.”²⁵⁹ Second, prophecy regards the knowledge of things, which surpasses the knowledge of words. Third, St. Paul regards prophecy – which could well be juxtaposed with the word of wisdom – more profitable to the Church: “If you in a tongue utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what is said? If I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me. Since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the Church” (1 Corinthians 14:9-12).

The Gifts of Miracles and Healing

The gifts of miracles and healing are manifestations of God’s omnipotence, benignity, and compassion, especially to those who suffer from physiological ailment or weakness.²⁶⁰ Beginning with miracles, St. Thomas compares this gift with prophecy to illustrate understanding: “Just as the prophet’s mind is moved by divine inspiration to know something supernaturally, so too it is possible for the mind of the miracle worker to be moved to do something resulting in the miraculous effect which God causes by His power.”²⁶¹ As in the case

²⁵⁹ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 176 a. 2.

²⁶⁰ Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*, ed. Larcher, et al 12:728.

²⁶¹ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 178 a. 1.

of Peter raising Tabitha from the dead, it is not Peter who is the cause of the woman being raised from the dead, but God who is the principal worker.²⁶² We may be a channel in the working of signs and wonders, either by “inward movement, speech, or some outward action, or again the bodily contact of a dead body.”²⁶³ St. Thomas offers two considerations in terms of the gift of miracles:

One is that which is done, [namely, that] this is something surpassing the faculty of nature, and in this respect miracles are called virtues. The other thing is the purpose for which miracles are wrought, namely the manifestation of something supernatural, and in this respect, they are commonly called signs: but on account of some excellence they receive the name of wonder or prodigy, as showing something from afar.²⁶⁴

The role that faith has in the one who works miracles cannot be undermined because it “proceeds from God’s omnipotence on which faith relies.”²⁶⁵ True miracles are “wrought by the power of God, because God works them for man’s benefit.”²⁶⁶ By miracles, God mightily confirms the truth which has been spoken. Similar with the case of prophecy where the faith of a sinner may not hinder God’s sovereignty at work, the wicked may be able to perform miraculous deeds. Nothing “hinders a living thing from working through a dead instrument, as a man through a stick. God can work while even employing instrumentally the faith of a sinner.”²⁶⁷ In other words, if a true doctrine is proclaimed by a sinner which is followed by a miracle, the

²⁶² Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 178 a. 1.

²⁶³ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 178 a. 1 ad. 1.

²⁶⁴ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 178 a. 1 ad. 3.

²⁶⁵ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 178 a. 1 ad. 5.

²⁶⁶ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 178 a. 2.

²⁶⁷ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 178 a. 2 ad. 2.

miracle attests not to the personal holiness of the one who has performed the work, but to the confirmation of the teaching.²⁶⁸

True Miracles or Demonic Influence?

This understanding makes way for us the next reason St. Thomas thinks that God employs others to work miracles. Miracles “demonstrate proof of a person’s holiness,” which God desires to “propose as an example of virtue”:

In the second way miracles are not wrought except by the saints, since it is in proof of their holiness that miracles are wrought during their lifetime or after death, either by themselves or by others. For we read that God *wrought by the hand of Paul...miracles and even there were brought from his body to the sick, handkerchiefs...and the diseases departed from them.* In this way indeed there is nothing to prevent a sinner from working miracles by invoking a saint; but the miracle is ascribed not to him, but to the one in proof of whose holiness such things are done.²⁶⁹

This could at first glance risk the misinterpretation that the gifts *gratis datae* indicate one’s state of grace. However, this is an incorrect supposition according to Bernhard Blankenhorn, since

Unlike the habitus of the seven gifts, a *habitus* to receive a charismatic act does not enjoy a necessary link with sanctifying grace...The classic biblical examples of non-believers and even grave sinners who transmit prophecy involve individuals who uttered prophecy for a short period of time (Balaam in the Book of Numbers) or on rare occasions (Caiaphas in chapter 11 of John’s Gospel, where the evangelist implies the existence of occasional prophecy through the person of the high priest). I strongly suspect that regular charismatic-like activity manifest in the lives of grave sinners most often pertains to the demonic realm.

²⁶⁸ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 178 a. 2 ad. 3.

²⁶⁹ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 178 a. 2.

Here, there is no habitus... I would propose that most authentic charismatic acts found among non-believers or even grave sinners involve nothing but acts of the Spirit: they are only momentary gifts. Balaam and Caiaphas are the classic biblical examples, which demonstrate the distinction and separability of charisms from sanctity.²⁷⁰

If someone – whose state of grace is in question – is working miracles, consideration of whether its supernatural activity was a display of demonic activity would not be imprudent.²⁷¹ To some degree, we can speculate that “charismatic activity [of those who are not in a state of grace] might continue while sin remains secret and their faith public...however, this confronts a deep mystery for discerning the divine Spirit and the spirit of evil.”²⁷² Nevertheless, *gratia gratis data* is given to those whom God pleases since he decrees such gifts for the salvation of others, and not their damnation. Hence, it would be unfitting and altogether inappropriate for *gratia gratis data* to be misconstrued and used for personal glorification. Moreover, if the gifts *gratis datae* were performed out of an evil intention, then it would be more reasonable to suspect its origin from demonic entities. Ultimately, the error of falling into associating gifts of *gratis datae* with holiness would be to the detriment for oneself or others.²⁷³

²⁷⁰ Blankenhorn, “The Metaphysics of Charisms,” 407-408.

²⁷¹ Aquinas, *ST I* q. 114 a. 4. Thomas notes that “if we take a miracle in the strict sense, the demons cannot work miracles, nor can any creature, but God alone: since in the strict sense a miracle is something done outside the order of the entire created nature, under which order every power of a creature is contained. But sometimes miracles may be taken in a wide sense, for whatever exceeds the human power and experience. And thus, demons can work miracles, that is, things which rouse man's astonishment.” Thomas also says that “although these works of demons which appear marvelous to us are not real miracles, they are sometimes nevertheless something real. Thus, the magicians of Pharaoh by the demons' power produced real serpents and frogs.

²⁷² Blankenhorn, “The Metaphysics of Charisms,” 409.

²⁷³ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 178 a. 2 ad. 4.

Not a Proof of Holiness

It is true that God works through a person to work miracles to attest to his divine indwelling in the individual, as seen in the cases of Christ and the saints. Sanctity, for both cases, is a prerequisite for such working of miracles.²⁷⁴ Nevertheless, it is critical that we do not presume to seat ourselves upon the throne of judgment and deliberate the question of another's state of soul based on evidence of *gratiae gratis datae* manifesting in his life. Would it not be presumptuous and even reckless for us to calculate works of *gratiae gratis datae* as the sum evidence for determining another's state of soul?²⁷⁵ Ultimately, the gift of miracles confirms the power of God over all things that so that, even in the case of a saint working a miracle, God is the principal worker.²⁷⁶ But if a sinner were to work a miracle by invoking the intercession of a saint, God may permit the manifestation of the miracle to serve as a sign of the saint's holiness.²⁷⁷

The Holy Spirit will always adequately support the work of the Church and provide the means for orienting others to their salvation. Just as some are able to arrive to the knowledge of God through natural effects, one can be "brought to a certain degree of supernatural knowledge of the objects of faith by certain supernatural effects."²⁷⁸ While the purpose of instructing others

²⁷⁴ Newton, "The Catholic Charismatic Renewal," 32.

²⁷⁵ Thomas seems to provide an answer for this line of reasoning when he analyzes the question, "Whether God Always Loves More the Better Things." The question debates whether the Apostles Peter or John were most loved by Christ. In the end, Thomas concludes that "it may seem presumptuous to pass judgement on these matters; since the Lord and no other is the weigher of spirits." It seems fitting that Thomas would conclude similarly here, particularly if God allows his miracles to be wrought by others. See *ST I*, q. 20 a. 4 ad. 3.

²⁷⁶ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 178 a. 1 ad. 1.

²⁷⁷ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 178 a. 2.

²⁷⁸ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 178 a. 1; Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*, ed. Larcher, et al 12:728.

is to help them grow in the knowledge of faith, so it is the purpose of miracles that others may be confirmed in their faith.²⁷⁹ The gift of healing, distinct but related to the gift of miracles, bestows “a benefit, namely, bodily health.”²⁸⁰ By this gift, others are persuaded not only on account of the greatness of the deed, but also on account of the benefit.²⁸¹

Our Responsibility to Exercise *Gratiae Gratis Datae*

By understanding the nature of these gifts *gratis datae*, we should not underestimate nor relinquish the role of the Church’s charismatic nature. These gifts are, in fact, the signs that are given to accompany those who believe to promote the good news of the Gospel (cf. Mark 16:17-18). St. Thomas is not satisfied by only providing a theological analysis of *gratiae gratis datae*. Rather, he is also concerned for their proper implementation:

Other effects are *necessary*, not throughout life, but at *certain times and places*: such as performing miracles, foretelling the future, and the like. And to these habitual perfections are not given, but certain impressions are made by God which cease when the act ceases, and they *must* be repeated when the act is opportune to be repeated: just as the prophet’s mind is illuminated by a new light in every revelation; and in every working of miracles there must be present a new efficacy of the divine power.²⁸²

²⁷⁹ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 178 a. 1 ad. 5.

²⁸⁰ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 178 a. 1 ad. 4.

²⁸¹ Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*, ed. Larcher, et al 12:728.

²⁸² Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles* (hereafter ScG), Bk. III, c. 154 (ed. Vernon J. Bourke; Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press), 25 [emphasis added].

Here, St. Thomas underlines *gratiae gratis datae* as “certain impressions made by God” which are necessary in certain times and places because the efficacy of divine power is manifested.²⁸³ We must respond by exercising the extraordinary grace *gratis data* that we have received and repeat it as many times as necessary.²⁸⁴ The sense of urgency that St. Thomas entreats us echoes the same pleading that St. Paul made to the Church. *Gratiae gratis datae* are meant to be exercised because God has willed these gifts of grace for his Church. Even a sinner, or one who is not in a state of grace, is not excluded from this responsibility in the work of salvation. Regardless of the kind of gifts of *gratis datae* and the number of times God wills to extend it, each of us must exercise them. These manifestations of the Spirit do continue, in fact, to profit the Church because they are both effective and express the power of God.²⁸⁵

The Relationship between Praise and *Gratiae Gratis Datae*

What we have shown so far at this point is the dynamism that these gifts bring to the life of the Church, which may turn and lead others to *gratia gratum faciens*. But we must also consider how the power of these supernatural gifts are also intended to evoke the praise that is due to God. When Christ appointed the seventy to carry out the mission of preaching the Kingdom of God, he commanded that they exercise the authority that he had given them to

²⁸³ Aquinas, *ScG*, 25.

²⁸⁴ Aquinas, *ScG*, 25 [emphasis added].

²⁸⁵ See Kilian McDonnell and George T. Montague, *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, 178-179. This highlights, among other Fathers of the Church, the writings of St. Hilary of Poitiers, who emphasized the effective power that *gratia gratis data* had in the life of the Church.

effectively demonstrate the message he had entrusted (Luke 10:8-9). After the seventy returned from their mission, they came back rejoicing, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!” (Luke 10:17).

The praise and glory that is owed to the God who works marvelous deeds must not, then, be discounted. In fact, praise confronts and diminishes the power of hell, as Christ himself responded to the seventy, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven” (Luke 10:18). Because *gratiae gratis datae* manifest the divine power of God, they lend opportunities and even a certain obligation to give the praise that is due to him. This form of worshipping God thwarts the enemy of souls because we direct our affections to God and withdraw from things that oppose him.²⁸⁶ Furthermore, praise is profitable for others because it prompts them to direct their affections towards God and draws out faith to believe and trust in the God who saves (cf. Psalms 68:9-10). When praise is fittingly given to him, our faith is simultaneously strengthened in God who keeps us firm and irreproachable to the end (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:8-9). Faith-filled praise, then, demands our surrender and trust in God to work by any means he chooses. Whether the effects of *gratiae gratis datae* are worked through or for us, our most proper and fitting response is to praise God who has intervened in a divine and wholly supernatural way. Rather than attending to the one through whom God has worked, praise orders our gaze to the God who is intensely interested in the salvation of all. This is, in fact, how Christ responds with the seventy who return rejoicing. He turns their gaze not on what *they* are doing, but at what God is doing (cf. Luke 10:20). In

²⁸⁶ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 91 a. 1.

these ways, praise hinders the enemy and causes him to recoil (cf. Psalm 8:2). Thus, the praise of God ends more in our own benefit.²⁸⁷

Ultimately, these gratuitous gifts will have no significance unless they build up the Church and evoke the praise that is owed to God. They will have no value if they do not propel others outside the Church to seek Christ. They will be rendered worthless if we do not use them to glorify God, the giver of these gifts. They will lose all purpose if they do not orient others to the greatest of spiritual gifts: *caritas*. Without *caritas* as the final goal, we who may speak in tongues are noisy, clanging cymbals. Without *caritas*, we who have prophetic powers, knowledge and understanding of the world's mysteries, prove nothing (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:1-3). *Gratiae gratis datae* will eventually pass away, but only when the aim of union with God has been accomplished (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:9-10).

Conclusion

In reflecting upon St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, St. Thomas considers how the gifts of *gratiae gratis datae* are manifestations of the Holy Spirit for which we ought to give God thanks. Because the gifts of *gratia gratis data* are given as gifts from God, they are dealt to us according to His will and measure. *Gratiae gratis datae* is given for the common good and given to orient others toward their salvation of others (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:33). This is made possible by the Holy Spirit who has been given as gift to Christ's Church who is the principle of unity (cf. John 3:5). Each member is necessary to the spirit of this unity and the edification of

²⁸⁷ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 91 a. 1 ad. 3.

others. The necessity and diversity within the Body of Christ corresponds to the diversity of gifts to which St. Paul speaks of in his Epistles.²⁸⁸ It is essential that each of us be united to this Body as an open recipient of Christ's gift of His Spirit which has been given (cf. Romans 5:5).

What, then, can we learn of *gratiae gratis datae* from the writings of St. Thomas? How do these gifts function in orienting others to God? The understanding that St. Thomas supplies reveals that God freely bestows these on whomever he wills, and that the conferral of these gifts are not reserved for those in the state of grace. Rather, these gifts of grace reveal the purpose that God chooses to work in us for the good of the other. St. Thomas' exposition on the gifts *gratis datae*, which were highly regarded by St. Paul, impart that they still have a key place in the Church.

Hence, St. Thomas' writings convey the considerable and effective role that *gratiae gratis datae* plays in the Body of Christ. We now turn to how his insights impacted the Second Vatican Council, particularly the Dogmatic Constitution, *Lumen Gentium*, which gave due diligence to this aspect of grace. The achievement of the Second Vatican Council in the sphere of charisms will thus allow us to see how the Church actively and continually seeks to faithfully respond to the graces God offers her.

²⁸⁸ Aquinas, *ST II-II*, q. 178 a. 1; Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*, ed. Larcher, et al 12:728.

CHAPTER IV: IMPLEMENTING *GRATIAE GRATIS DATAE* IN THE CHURCH TODAY

“As all the members of the human body, though many, form one body, so also are the faithful in Christ.... There is only one Spirit who, according to His own richness and the needs of the ministries, gives His different gifts for the welfare of the Church.”²⁸⁹ This rich text from the document *Lumen Gentium* was one among many Vatican II texts that, drawing from Pauline theology, necessitated a response to the demands of the Church’s ministry to employ the gifts *gratis datae* bestowed by the Holy Spirit. In the course of writing *Lumen Gentium*, theologian Yves Congar retrieved the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas on *gratiae gratis datae*. Congar’s work synthesized the relationship of pneumatology and ecclesiology which largely substantiated *Lumen Gentium*’s entreaty that these spiritual gifts be placed at the service of the Church.

Furthermore, Congar sought to further develop what he saw as an underappreciated theme in theology: the role and work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church. His contribution to the writing of *Lumen Gentium* helped to emphasize that the Spirit is not stagnant in the life of the Church but is present wherever the Church is. This significantly contributed to the understanding and implementation of *gratiae gratis datae*, or charismatic gifts, in the life of the Church following the teachings of the Second Vatican Council. One might even posit that the work conducted by the Second Vatican Council reawakened the Church to recognize the life of the Spirit in Christ’s body more deeply.

²⁸⁹ *Lumen Gentium*, 7.

The Writings of *Lumen Gentium*

Lumen Gentium is a rich document that speaks of the mission of the Church, which is directed to the evangelization of all nations and cultivated by the holiness of its members, made possible by the Holy Spirit. In particular, chapter one of the document unveils the mystery of the Holy Trinity and how we are purposed to mirror this communion in the Church.²⁹⁰ It illuminates that Christ, who makes Himself present in the Holy Sacrifice of Mass, strengthens our unity as the Body of Christ. This Body, the Church, “from whom we go forth, through whom we live, and toward whom our whole life strains,” is equipped with various gifts and ministries so as to strengthen unity and accomplish the salvific work that was tasked to us.²⁹¹ Moreover, we are empowered by his gifts to enter into this salvific mission through the Holy Spirit and by the self-gift of Christ. We are continually provided for “in his body, that is, in the Church, for gifts of ministries through which, by his power, we serve each other unto salvation so that, carrying out the truth in love, we may through all things grow unto him who is our head” (Ephesians 4:11-16).²⁹²

Furthermore, chapter two of *Lumen Gentium* highlights the provisions that God provides for his people through his individual gifts of grace forms us into a stronger community. The Church “indeed is mindful that she must work with that king to whom the nations were given for an inheritance and to whose city gifts are brought.”²⁹³ Each contributes their own gifts, so that unity can be strengthened. The effect of this work in the Church is that “whatever good is found

²⁹⁰ *Lumen Gentium*, 1-3.

²⁹¹ *Lumen Gentium*, 3; 5.

²⁹² *Lumen Gentium*, 7.

²⁹³ *Lumen Gentium*, 13.

sown in the minds and hearts of men...these not only are preserved from destruction, but are purified, raised up, and perfected for the glory of God, the confusion of the devil, and the happiness of man.”²⁹⁴

The teaching from *Lumen Gentium* emphasizes the call for all of the faithful to place their gifts at the service of the Church that strengthens communion, echoing similar themes of Saint Paul in his epistles:

They [the hierarchy of the Church] also know that they were not ordained by Christ to take upon themselves alone the entire salvific mission of the Church toward the world. On the contrary they understand that it is their noble duty to shepherd the faithful and to recognize their ministries and charisms, so that all according to their proper roles may cooperate in this common undertaking with one mind. For we must all “practice the truth in love, and so grow up in all things in Him who is head, Christ. For from Him the whole body, being closely joined and knit together through every joint of the system, according to the functioning in due measure of each single part, derives its increase to the building up of itself in love... in [the] diversity [of the Church], all bear witness to the wonderful unity in the Body of Christ. This very diversity of graces, ministries and works gathers the children of God into one, because “all these things are the work of one and the same Spirit.”²⁹⁵

Lumen Gentium was by no means the only document from the Second Vatican Council that encouraged the exercise of charisms. In fact, the Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People, or *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, also beseeched the faithful to exercise charisms for the good of the Church:

The Holy Spirit sanctifies the People of God through the ministry and the sacraments. However, for the exercise of the apostolate he gives the faithful special gifts besides (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:7), ‘allotting them to each one as he wills’ (1 Corinthians 12:11), so that each and all, putting at the service of others the grace received may be ‘as good stewards of God’s varied gifts’ (1 Peter 4:10), for the building up of the whole body in charity. From the reception of these charisms, even the most ordinary ones, there arises for each of the faithful the right and duty of exercising them in the Church and in the world for the

²⁹⁴ *Lumen Gentium*, 17.

²⁹⁵ *Lumen Gentium*, 30; 32.

good of men and the development of the Church, of exercising them in the freedom of the Holy Spirit who ‘breathes where he wills’ (John 3:8), and at the same time in communion with his brothers in Christ, and with his pastors especially.²⁹⁶

So how can this mission of the Church, united in Christ and the Holy Spirit, be more fully realized? What role does *gratiae gratis datae* have in the life of the Church following the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas on these gifts? Moreover, what role do these writings play in the Church’s endeavor to form us in the life of the Holy Spirit?

Twentieth century Dominican theologian Yves Congar undertook the task of answering these questions, particularly in his contributions to pneumatology. Congar found it necessary to investigate the Person of the Holy Spirit, as he found that there was “no revelation in the objective sense of the Person of the Holy Spirit as there is of the Person of the Word and, through that Person, of the Person of the Father.”²⁹⁷ Furthermore, Congar understood that knowledge of such tenets of the faith was necessary in order that communion and love might be achieved in the Church, to which the mission of the Holy Spirit was directed.²⁹⁸ Thus, in order that we obtain a better knowledge of the Holy Spirit through pneumatology, it was necessary that the Holy Spirit be implored to help achieve this end. This was a necessary end to which the writings of St. Thomas on *gratiae gratis datae* would contribute.

²⁹⁶ Second Vatican Council, *Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People: Apostolicam Actuositatem* (ed. by Austin P. Flannery; Vol. 1; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978), 3.

²⁹⁷ Yves Congar. *I Believe in the Holy Spirit* (New York: Crossroad Pub, 1997), vii.

²⁹⁸ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, x.

Setting the Stage for a Pneumatological Renewal – Congar’s Influence on *Lumen Gentium*

In *Lumen Gentium*, the unifying themes of ecclesiology and pneumatology are clear and significant. These two themes, as Congar’s theological work expressed, echoed the conviction of Saint Irenaeus who had stated, “Where the Spirit is, there is the Church.”²⁹⁹ Congar conveyed in the drafting of the first chapter of *Lumen Gentium* that he wished to express “the anthropological and soteriological themes found in the teachings of Saint Paul.”³⁰⁰ He also understood that while there was a true integration of pneumatology in the writings of the Second Vatican Council, it nonetheless had to be realized in the life of the Church.³⁰¹ He emphasized that we would be able to recognize such life as “unfolding in the breath of the Spirit of Pentecost,” and in a certain sense, such a theory was “dependent on praxis.”³⁰² In other words, while Congar understood that the conciliar writings from the Second Vatican Council were largely influenced by Thomistic and patristic principles, it was a theology, nonetheless, that had to be *implemented*. This implementation would be possible through our activation of the charisms [*gratiae gratis datae*], as the writings of *Lumen Gentium* entreated. Congar believed that charisms were very much aligned with the nature of the Church’s mission. He taught that it is “God who builds up His Church. In order to do this, He instituted through Jesus Christ, the structures of that Church. At the same time, He continues to build it up, at all periods in history, by the gifts [charisms]...to

²⁹⁹ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 3.24.1.

³⁰⁰ William Henn. “Yves Congar and *Lumen Gentium*.” *Gregorianum* 86 (2005): 579.

³⁰¹ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 172 (vol. I).

³⁰² Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 172 (vol. I).

which St. Paul refers.³⁰³ Hence, a recognition of these gifts is necessary in order that an abundance of grace be received, and the salvific work of the Church be furthered.

The Pneumatology of Yves Congar

Congar's pneumatology was a fruit of his immersion in the studies of Scripture, the early Church, and the writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas.³⁰⁴ It was through such submersion that Congar observed the lack of unity between pneumatology and ecclesiology in early twentieth century Roman Catholic theology. This dilemma was accounted for in his writings, in which the integration between pneumatological anthropology and pneumatological ecclesiology is clear.³⁰⁵ Congar expressed,

Perhaps the greatest difference between ancient patristic ecclesiology and modern ecclesiology is that the former included anthropology, while the latter is merely the theory of a system, a book of public law; one may ask if the system requires men of a certain quality, or if it considers them interchangeable. The anthropology of patristic ecclesiology is that of a human communion, which finds its full authenticity in and through that communion, because in this way it rediscovers a resemblance to God. This is the meeting place of the anthropology and the ecclesiology, and it is this 'communicating humanity' which is the subject of the Church's actions and attributes. A tradition exists on this question that should one day be restored and infused with new life.³⁰⁶

³⁰³ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 162 (vol. II).

³⁰⁴ Elizabeth Teresa Groppe. "The Contribution of Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit," *Theological Studies* 62 (2001): 455.

³⁰⁵ Groppe, "The Contribution of Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit," 457.

³⁰⁶ Groppe, "The Contribution of Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit," 455.

Pneumatological Anthropology

Congar's pneumatological anthropology was grounded in the Book of Genesis where man was made in the Divine Image of God. He contemplated that "human persons made in the image of God...find fulfillment in communion. [They] are destined to go beyond self in knowledge and love of another."³⁰⁷ Furthermore, Congar's formation in Thomistic theology undergirded his understanding of the human person who shares "in God's activity and causality."³⁰⁸ This approach led to the understanding that human persons are gifted with freedom, the freedom that is expressed in true relationships of "mutuality and communion, relationships of active invitation to others and active receptivity to God."³⁰⁹ However, Congar understood that the human person is broken and splintered by sin, and that healing could be found through the Word [Christ] and the Holy Spirit. God would not stop there, however, but open His invitation to share in His divine life. Congar further explained that the Holy Spirit was a "life principle who graces us with a supra-human participation in the activity of God. When the Spirit dwells in our hearts, we love God with the very love with which God loves us."³¹⁰ Participation in this life principle, which led one to relationship with God, was what Congar believed to be true holiness. Moreover, such communion with God would also be expressed in communion with others.

³⁰⁷ Groppe, "The Contribution of Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit," 458.

³⁰⁸ Groppe, "The Contribution of Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit," 458.

³⁰⁹ Groppe, "The Contribution of Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit," 458.

³¹⁰ Groppe, "The Contribution of Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit," 459.

Pneumatological Ecclesiology

This understanding of pneumatological anthropology was deeply rooted in Congar's pneumatological ecclesiology, in which he articulated that "Ecclesial life is both an expression of our new life in the Spirit and a means toward our transfiguration, for our fulfillment as creatures made in the divine image can be found only in communion with God and with others."³¹¹ Congar expressed in his pneumatological ecclesiology that the Holy Spirit is not confined to the Church, but is active wherever truth is present.³¹² Moreover, Congar stressed the close union between the Holy Spirit and Christ acting together. In effect, the Holy Spirit, who together with Jesus Christ co-institutes the Church, "empowers the Church's sacraments and doxology, builds up the Church with charisms, and makes the Church one, holy, catholic, and apostolic."³¹³ This union and action of the Holy Spirit and Christ was what Congar characterized as the "ecclesial means of grace," that is, the Word, the sacraments, and the apostolic ministry.³¹⁴ The apostolic dimension in the life of the Church, according to Congar, flourished "through the charisms of the Spirit given to the members of the ecclesial body."³¹⁵ For Congar, charisms are an integral dimension of a spirit-infused theology of the Church. He would thus emphasize in this matter, that a restoration in what he called a "pneumatological ecclesiology of the Council," would be found in the sphere of charisms:

³¹¹ Groppe, "The Contribution of Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit," 460.

³¹² It is important to note here that Congar did not believe that charisms were reserved only for members of the Church. He did note that "Baptized and professed Christians must reflect on the gift of the Spirit in the context of a theology of the Church" See Groppe, "The Contribution of Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit," 460.

³¹³ Groppe, "The Contribution of Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit," 460.

³¹⁴ Groppe, "The Contribution of Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit," 461.

³¹⁵ Groppe, "The Contribution of Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit," 462-463.

One of the most important ways in which the Holy Spirit has been restored to the pneumatological ecclesiology of the Council was in the sphere of charisms. This meant that the Church is built up not only by institutional means but also by the infinite variety of the gifts that each person ‘has the right and duty to use in the Church and in the world for the good of mankind and for the upbuilding of the Church...in the freedom of the Holy Spirit’ who ‘breathes where he will’ (John 3:8). At the same time, they must act in communion with their brothers in Christ and especially with their pastors. A new theology, or rather a new programme of ‘ministries’, giving the Church a new face that is quite different from the one that the earlier pyramidal and clerical ecclesiology presented, has developed since the Second Vatican Council on the basis of these charisms used for the common good and building up of the Church.³¹⁶

A close and careful investigation of the charisms as treated by St. Thomas in his exposition on *gratiae gratis datae* shines forth in Congar’s theology.³¹⁷ Following St. Thomas, Congar saw the nature of charisms as assisting “in the transmission of revelation and faith only in certain times and places.”³¹⁸ Congar affirmed from Thomistic theology that charisms were for the sake of orienting others to their justification, even if they were not sanctifying in themselves.³¹⁹ Moreover, Congar argued that the charisms were the cornerstone on which we, the Body of Christ, would continue to be edified. So how was this to be accomplished?

Congar believed that charisms, such as “teaching, preaching, artistry, music, healing, justice advocacy, reconciliation, peace-making, and so forth” would also take on different forms and be expressed uniquely in various members of the Church.³²⁰ Such expression and vitality in serving the Church in this charismatic dimension would be, Congar taught, a “contribution to the

³¹⁶ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 170 (vol. I).

³¹⁷ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 119-121; Blankenhorn, “The Metaphysics of Charisms,” 378.

³¹⁸ Blankenhorn, “The Metaphysics of Charisms,” 387-388.

³¹⁹ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 121 (vol. I).

³²⁰ Groppe “The Contribution of Yves Congar’s Theology of the Holy Spirit,” 463.

Church's very constitution."³²¹ Moreover, our communion as the members of the Church would be strengthened and edified not only by the practice of charisms, but would also enable each person to advance in a more unique relationship with the Holy Spirit.

Seeds of Growth in the Church Following the Second Vatican Council

Following the Second Vatican Council and the seeds that had been planted for a new awareness of the gifts of the Spirit, Congar believed that there were signs "of a true pneumatology in the teachings of the Second Vatican Council."³²² While there were many writings produced during the Council that enhanced understanding of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church, Congar believed that the truth of the Spirit's work had to be *confirmed* in that same life:

The whole people of God knows that it has the task of building up the Church and that lay people have to contribute their gifts or charisms [*gratiae gratis datae*] to this task. The local churches are still looking for ways of life that are peculiar to them. The chapter on conciliarity that was opened by Vatican II has not yet been brought to an end. There have been many crises, but there have also been generous initiatives. The Catholic Renewal which began in Pittsburgh in the United States in 1967 and which has spread throughout the world is clearly part of this living pneumatology, since the Spirit is undoubtedly experienced in that movement, at least according to the testimony of those who follow it. Is it perhaps the response to the expectation of a new Pentecost that Pope John XXIII expressed more than once in connection with the Council? It is at least part of that response, but the total response is much greater and much more mysterious. The entirety of the Church is unfolding in the breath of the Spirit of Pentecost.³²³

³²¹ Groppe, "The Contribution of Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit," 463.

³²² Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 172 (vol. II).

³²³ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 172 (vol. II).

Congar saw the Catholic charismatic renewal in 1967, which shortly followed Pope John XXIII's call for the council to be "a new Pentecost," as a form of responding to living a Spirit-infused life.³²⁴ Congar, among other theologians who were asked to evaluate the authenticity of the renewal, used the Thomistic framework of *gratiae gratis datae* to verify its genuineness. The teachings that flowed from the Second Vatican Council that specifically addressed these gifts were in itself "a retrieval of what had long been neglected in the theological tradition."³²⁵ It also emphasized that charisms were not reserved or limited to some. For those vested with ecclesial authority, practical ways to guide the faithful in discerning their own charisms were formulated so as to strengthen the bonds between the hierarchical and charismatic dimensions of the Church. Thus, St. Thomas' treatise on *gratiae gratis datae* found an avenue of implementation.

We can see from the contribution of Congar's pneumatology and its overflow into the writings of *Lumen Gentium* the desire to intensely unify pneumatological theology with ecclesiology, which in turn would strengthen its members through the power of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, it is clear from the writings of *Lumen Gentium* that a re-discovery and implementation of charisms would be needed for this theology to take root. But it seems that such revitalization of the pneumatology that Congar emphasized is still needed today. The

³²⁴ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 149 (vol. II).

³²⁵ Healy, "The Church Grows Young," 192. Pope John Paul II also stated, "Whenever the Spirit intervenes, he leaves people astonished. He brings about events of amazing newness; he radically changes persons and history. This was the unforgettable experience of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council during which, under the guidance of the same Spirit, the Church rediscovered the charismatic dimension as one of her constitutive elements" (from John Paul II's *Address to the Ecclesial Movements and New Communities*, May 30, 1998. https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1998/may/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19980530_riflessioni.html).

fundamental question, then, is how this pneumatology, rooted in Pauline theology, and treated extensively by St. Thomas, can be better realized in the Church today?

The Writings of *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*

Iuvenescit Ecclesia is a letter from the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith that was written in order to better implement the charismatic dimension of the Church today. Addressed to the bishops of the Catholic Church and promulgated on the Solemnity of Pentecost in 2016, *Iuvenescit Ecclesia* may be arguably the most substantial document the Church has had on charisms since the writing of *Lumen Gentium*.³²⁶ The document draws much of its teaching from *Lumen Gentium* and highlights how the relationship between the hierarchical and charismatic dimensions are ordered toward the life, unity, and mission of the Church. Furthermore, the letter draws from the exhortations of Pope Francis and his predecessors, Pope Benedict XVI and Pope John Paul II, who show how these realities in the Church are necessary constituents in her life. While the document has many strengths, we will limit our consideration to how the charisms are conceptualized and how they are valued.³²⁷ After this, we will examine a limitation of the document, mainly, its treatment of “charism” in one sense of the word.

In terms of how the charisms are conceptualized, *Iuvenescit Ecclesia* regards charisms as both ordinary gifts (teaching, service, beneficence) and extraordinary gifts (healing, mighty

³²⁶ John Stayne, “Post-Conciliar Developments in the Catholic Doctrine of Charisms: *Lumen Gentium* and *Iuvenescit Ecclesia* Compared,” *Irish Theological Quarterly* 87 (2022): <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00211400221098013>.

³²⁷ Stayne, “*Lumen Gentium* and *Iuvenescit Ecclesia* Compared,” <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00211400221098013>.

deeds, variety of tongues).³²⁸ They have “something of an unforeseeable nature” since they are bestowed by the Holy Spirit who “blows where he wills” (John 3:8).³²⁹ They are distinguishable from the hierarchical gifts which have a place of prominence within the Church. The document clearly makes known what it means by hierarchical gifts, namely, that they are “proper to the Sacrament of [Holy] Orders, in its diverse grades,” which are “given so that the Church as communion may never fail to make to each member of the faithful an objective offer of grace in the sacraments, and so she may offer both normative proclamation of the Gospel and pastoral care.”³³⁰ The hierarchical gifts relate to the “ecclesial sacramental structure,” such as the power to celebrate the Eucharist and forgive sins.³³¹ The hierarchical gifts – unlike the “unforeseeable charisms” which are “powerfully dynamic realities” – are of their nature “stable, permanent, and irrevocable” by which the offer of Christ’s grace is assured.³³² Hence, the charismatic gifts and hierarchical gifts are not equal. The hierarchical gifts are essential since upon them relies the sacramental economy.

This leads us to our second point on how the charismatic gifts are valued. While the charismatic gifts are uniquely given to individuals, which stem from the Church, they are for the purpose of intensifying ecclesial life.³³³ In this light, both charismatic and hierarchical gifts are

³²⁸ Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, *The Church Made Anew: Iuvenescit Ecclesia*. (Vatican: Rome, 2016), 6.
https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20160516_iuvenescit-ecclesia_en.html.

³²⁹ *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, 17.

³³⁰ *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, 14.

³³¹ *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, 13-14.

³³² *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, 2; 13; 15.

³³³ *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, 13.

compatible. *Iuvenescit Ecclesia* stresses that *Lumen Gentium*, “in presenting the gifts mediated through the Spirit, precisely through the distinction between the diverse hierarchical and charismatic gifts, highlights their difference in unity.”³³⁴ This seems to suggest, then, that a Church “lacking the charismatic gifts should not be seen as simply a less lively or vibrant Church, but also less fully the Church.”³³⁵

Unfortunately, one of the limitations that springs from this document is that it presents its pastoral application of charisms in only one sense. That is to say, the letter limits its treatment of charisms to institutionalized movements only, as opposed to including individual members of the faithful which *Lumen Gentium* clearly addresses.³³⁶ According to Dr. Mary Healy, the document is more concerned with “that of a founding ‘originating’ charism – the specific grace given to the founder of an ecclesial movement or a religious order.”³³⁷ But Healy maintains that we should not take this as the primary sense of what charism means:

While this [members of a group participating in its charism] certainly [has] a valid meaning, it is not the primary meaning of charism as described by St. Paul and reflected on by St. Thomas Aquinas, according to which distinct charisms are given *to each individual* precisely so that they may be exercise among the members of a community for mutual edification. Moreover, the narrower meaning does not account for the specific charisms mentioned by Paul, including the more obviously supernatural gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10: the utterance of wisdom, the utterance of knowledge, faith, healings, the working of miracles, prophecy, discernment of spirits, tongues, and interpretation of tongues.³³⁸

³³⁴ *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, 9.

³³⁵ Stayne, “*Lumen Gentium* and *Iuvenescit Ecclesia* Compared,” <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/00211400221098013>.

³³⁶ Cf. *Lumen Gentium*, 12.

³³⁷ Healy, “The Church Grows Young,” 194-195.

³³⁸ Healy, “The Church Grows Young,” 195.

This limitation need not obstruct the way that we will examine the following discernment criteria for charisms in *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, which “are intended to help the recognition of the authentically ecclesial nature of the charisms,” in the context of individual discernment.³³⁹ Because the role of the pastor in this matter is critical, we must see how both time and discernment must take place to verify the authenticity of a charism at work. In this way, we will observe how these criteria are helpful in both contexts of an institution and of an individual.

Criteria for Discerning Charisms

First, the “primacy of the vocation of every Christian to holiness” in discerning charisms in an individual or body must first be considered.³⁴⁰ Since the gifts are ordered towards the perfection of the Church and are at the service of charity, ecclesial authorities must help others discern the presence of charisms with this end in mind. Secondly, the charisms must be rooted in the teachings of the Gospel. Thirdly, one must discern whether the charism is aligned to the profession of the Catholic faith, meaning that the charism is united to the teachings of the faith under the authority of the Church’s magisterium. Fourthly, the charism is a “witness to a real communion with the whole Church” by which a “filial relationship to the Pope...and with the local bishop...implies a loyal readiness to embrace the doctrinal teachings and pastoral initiatives.”³⁴¹ Fifth, there must be a genuine and respectful recognition of other charismatic

³³⁹ *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, 18.

³⁴⁰ *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, 18.

³⁴¹ *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, 18.

entities in the Church which acknowledges the diversity of others' gifts by which others are edified. Sixth, the acceptance of trials in the discernment of charisms is an important sign which points to the maturity and growth one ought to accept for the purification of the gift. Seventh, the presence of spiritual fruits – stemming from utilizing gifts – such as peace and joy, must be taken into consideration. Lastly, the evidence of “social dimension of evangelization” which can potentially reach into multiple dimensions of the Church, ought to be palpable.³⁴²

This criterion of discerning charisma is vital for our study. We must realize the mystery of the Church in the context of our own lives and seek to place our spiritual gifts at her service. In line with the Thomistic perspective of *gratia gratis data*, the gifts are granted “precisely with a view to building up the whole Church and do not necessarily sanctify the one who receives them.”³⁴³ When the charismatic gifts are shared, they have a diffusion within the ecclesial community:

The charismatic gifts ‘are given to individual persons and can even be shared by others in such ways as to continue in time a precious and effective heritage, serving as a source of a particular spiritual affinity among persons.’ The relationship between the personal character of the charism and the possibility of sharing it expresses a decisive element in its dynamic, insofar as it touches upon the relationship that, in the ecclesial communion, always links person and community. Charismatic gifts, when exercised, can generate affinities, closeness, and spiritual relationships. Through these the charismatic patrimony, originating in the person of the founder, is shared in and deepened, thereby giving life to true spiritual families. The new ecclesial groups, in their diverse forms present themselves as shared charismatic gifts. Ecclesial movements and new communities show how a determinate founding charism can gather the faithful together and help them to live fully their Christian vocation and proper state of life in service of the ecclesial mission. The concrete historical forms this sharing takes may vary; for this very reason, as the

³⁴² *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, 18.

³⁴³ L. J. Cardinal Suenens. *Ecumenism and Charismatic Renewal* (Vol. 2 of *The Holy Spirit, Life-Breath of the Church*; Belgium: Fiat Association, 2001), 58.

history of spirituality shows, diverse foundations may arise from a single original founding charism.³⁴⁴

Placing gifts of grace at the service of the Church means that we submit in obedience to how the hierarchical authority of the Church directs us to utilize them.³⁴⁵ Just as one is given gifts for the good of the Church, we have the responsibility to exercise these gifts under the obedience and authority of the Church. Because none of us “own” our charisms, we are not dispensed from submitting these gifts of grace to the hierarchical authority. Charisms do not imply infallibility and do not fall outside the authority of the hierarchy. We cannot and must not ever assume that any charism, such as prophecy – which comes from God who is omniscient and omnipotent – renders us infallible. Likewise, the authorities of the Church must keep in mind the responsibility they have for the spiritual formation and discernment of those entrusted to their care.

Implications for Exercising Charisms in the Twenty-First Century

What can this analysis posit for us today? How can we confidently allow the Holy Spirit to act in our souls for the sake of others? First, we can promote the awareness of the Holy Spirit in every Christian soul. Just as the Holy Spirit animated the body of the first Christian community at Pentecost, so does the Holy Spirit propel each of us to live in His power. The graces of God that are offered to each of us, which enables us to participate in the divine life of

³⁴⁴ *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, 16.

³⁴⁵ *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, 17.

God, does not just end with our sanctification, but also works in us to orient others to salvation. The Spirit unleashes power into us so that we may take part in the salvation of our brothers and sisters. We, as Christians, are anointed and guided by the Spirit at every stage of our life by virtue of our Baptism. We are anointed to act as signs in the world to fearlessly demonstrate the Gospel in whatever manifestations that the Spirit wills to give through us. Furthermore, our anointing “is so much the work of the Spirit that it is an extension and a communication to believers of the prophetic and messianic anointing that Jesus received from the Spirit at his baptism.”³⁴⁶ Our anointing is always active, whether we are personally inspired or officially commissioned by the Church.³⁴⁷ We who proclaim Christ can, through the charismatic gifts, offer for others an encounter with the living God. The charisms “are heavenly gifts that enable [us] beyond all that [we] deserve, so that we may act as a vehicle through which people can experience the Risen Lord in his life-changing power.”³⁴⁸

Secondly, our exercise of the charisms can promote ecumenical unity, since it is the “duty of the religious authorities to recognize and welcome...the collective movements which the Spirit gives the Church.”³⁴⁹ Charisms must therefore be integrated into the great total gift of the Church, so that they may be returned to the people of God “adjusted, vivified, rooted in Christianity, assimilable, and ‘anointed.’”³⁵⁰ The restoration of the Church’s unity must itself be

³⁴⁶ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 102 (vol. II).

³⁴⁷ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 102 (vol. II).

³⁴⁸ Healy, “The Church Grows Young,” 210.

³⁴⁹ Suenens, *Ecumenism and Charismatic Renewal*, 100.

³⁵⁰ Suenens, *Ecumenism and Charismatic Renewal*, 100.

an ecclesial endeavor, otherwise it will not be achieved. We must question what responsibility we may have in our present situation when it comes to the exercise of charisms, so that the Church continues to prosper in her charismatic nature.³⁵¹

Conclusion

The pneumatology of Yves Congar, which highlighted importance on the charisms, provides us with the understanding that the Spirit “gives His different gifts for the welfare of the Church” as the Second Vatican Council emphasized. The Dogmatic Constitution, *Lumen Gentium*, beckons each of us to respond to the gifts and charisms of the Spirit, which was illuminated by the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas. The Letter, *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, is a compelling document that draws from *Lumen Gentium* and shows the necessary relationship between the hierarchical and charismatic dimensions of the Church. These means can function as catalysts to continue a pneumatological deepening in the Church, who calls her children to greater communion with the Holy Spirit. The same Holy Spirit, whose love has been poured into our hearts, strengthens our bonds and anoints us for a mission that seeks the salvation of all people.

³⁵¹ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 203 (vol. II).

CONCLUSION

This work has striven to convey the contribution of Thomistic thought of *gratiae gratis datae* and the great good that it still brings to God's Church. The nature of these gratuitous and transcendent gifts reveal that they are given freely and unconditionally, and do not necessarily signal personal sanctification. Faithful to what he learned from Saint Paul, St. Thomas's enunciation of the gifts *gratis datae* shows "the 'continuity' between Christ the Head and his members."³⁵² The gift of the Spirit given by Christ to his Church can be observed in the nature of these gratuitous gifts. Hence, it is fitting that the Spirit, who has been issued as gift to the entire Church, manifests divine power through *gratia gratis data* which attests to the fecundity still present in the Church.

The place of *gratia gratum faciens* was first discussed to show the primacy of this kind of grace in the work of salvation and the Holy Spirit's accompaniment to our Heavenly homeland. This sheer gift that emanates forth from God's very love proportions us to our ultimate end. We need grace upon grace to be fully alive so that we may reach the vision of God. But this is not achieved by our own faculties. Rather, we must cooperate with the divine aids that God constantly sends. We are able to either accept or reject God's operative movements of grace.

However, because God wishes to extend salvation to all, we are provided with other gifts of grace – *gratia gratis data* – that enable us to turn others to this supreme invitation. Because the Spirit is given as Gift to the members of the Church, it is fitting that *gratia gratis data* can be an avenue by which members of the Church make gifts of themselves through God's power. In

³⁵² Torrell, *Spiritual Master*, 189.

this way, we can subscribe to St. Thomas's imperative to exercise *gratiae gratis datae* repeatedly and as often as necessary.

We cannot deny that the contribution of Yves Congar was valuable to the Second Vatican Council as it reconsidered the place that charisms [*gratiae gratis datae*] had in the life of the Church. Because these gifts were placed in light of the ecclesial life of the Church, they were seen as "contributions to the Church's very constitution."³⁵³ However, their exercise must always be within the direction and discernment of ecclesial authority, which upholds the principle of St. Paul to "test everything" (cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22). This standard should take into consideration the necessary prudence and counsel we ought to seek in order to exercise these gifts "properly and in good order" (1 Corinthians 14:39-40). Nonetheless, the relationship between the hierarchical and charismatic dimensions of the Church are instituted for the sake of the Church and her good, as emphasized in *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*.

It would be false to presume that *gratia gratis data* has no real value in the Church and presume that these gifts of grace have no significance. We must be careful not to discard the importance that *gratia gratis data* plays in the realm of salvation. We must strive to exercise these transcendent gifts of grace out of love for our fellow neighbor when the time and place is appropriate. After all, St. Paul did exhort us to desire the higher gifts (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:31). Moreover, *gratiae gratis datae* credits the Church with demonstrations of supernatural power, which is perhaps an underlying reason why *Lumen Gentium* clearly articulates that they "are to

³⁵³ Groppe, "The Contribution of Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit," 105.

be received with thanksgiving and consolation for they are perfectly suited to and useful for the needs of the Church.”³⁵⁴

Thus, the Thomistic contribution of *gratia gratis data* cannot be underestimated nor undermined. Even though it was composed well over eight centuries ago, it still has an enduring value from which the Church can draw encouragement and strength in the spiritual gifts that God has endowed upon her. In considering St. Augustine’s own desire to glorify God through these gifts, perhaps his own fervor – as well as the fervor of the Angelic Doctor – can reawaken our own. God’s gracious will has endowed these gifts *gratis datae* on his Church so that they may more powerfully participate in the salvific mission that Christ entrusted to her. This mission has not been retracted. Thus, those who take part in the salvific mission of the Church can take encouragement in these heavenly gifts of grace that are *still* given so that others may be oriented to sanctification. By taking this call to heart, perhaps we too may be able to proclaim, “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted” (Isaiah 61:1).

³⁵⁴ *Lumen Gentium*, 12.

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