

FRANCISCAN CHRISTOLOGY

Absolute and Universal Primacy of Christ

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Christ and Francis

A man whom Christ drew towards Himself in a very special way was Francis of Assisi. Francis went about calling himself the "Herald of the Great King." Christ Himself put that idea into his heart by calling him to His service through a dream of a wonderful palace, and again from the cross of San Damiano. From that day the life of Francis was centered around the God-Man. Francis had one thought, and that was to love Christ more and more, to honor Him as well as he could, and to imitate Him as closely as possible. That he succeeded splendidly is clear from the fact that Christ Himself put the finishing touches to the likeness of Himself in Francis, by sealing him with the sacred marks of His own love for men. Moreover the Vicar of Christ has testified that no one has so closely imitated Christ as Francis.¹

Franciscan Christology

Such Christocentric piety and life was bound to exert its influence on the followers of Francis. All his true followers have ever adhered to the ideal set for them by their Father—an ardent love of, a deep devotion to, and a very close imitation of Christ the Ideal. And since for them life was intimately bound up with thought, it is but natural that an intense Christocentric life would color all their thinking. So when Franciscan scholars began to study the sacred sciences, they naturally centered all their thought on Christ. St. Bonaventure, for instance, is known for making Christ the center of all his theology. In fact the whole Franciscan school extolled Christ as highly as possible, according to the well-known phrase of the Doctor of the Word Incarnate, Blessed John Duns Scotus: "In commendando Christum, malo excedere quam deficere a laude sibi debita, si propter ignorantiam oporteat in alterutrum incidere."² They searched through the sacred sources of revelation for more information about Christ. They applied sound principles of philosophy to this revealed truth in order to get a clearer and deeper and broader knowledge of Christ; or, in the words of St. Paul, "to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, to know Christ's love which surpasses knowledge" (Eph. 3:18, 19). The results of their study we call Franciscan Christology. As is clear, it is not a new revelation about Christ; it is simply the contribution of Franciscan scholars towards a clearer and deeper and broader understanding of the revealed truths about the Incarnate Son of God.

Just as Christian theology is not merely the theology of the first few centuries after Christ, so Franciscan Christology is not merely the Christology of

the Franciscans of the thirteenth century. After all there has been a development in the latter as well as in the former. Nevertheless the great Franciscan Masters of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries deserve our special consideration. It is they who caught the spirit of Christ from St. Francis and handed it down to us. Besides, we shall do well to consult those writers outside the Franciscan family, who followed the Franciscan theologians.

Because of their supreme interest in Christ the Franciscans have given us an immense treasury of thought on Christ. Franciscan Christology is a vast field filled with many interesting and enlightening questions. However, I shall limit myself to a consideration of the subject of Christ's predestination and primacy, perhaps better known as the discussion about the final motive of the Incarnation, the very heart of Franciscan Christology.

Why Study the Primacy of Christ?

As just noted, the primacy of Christ has always interested the followers of St. Francis; therefore we should continue their splendid work for the glory of Christ. Besides, it is of great practical value for our spiritual life, since it is the foundation of Franciscan Christian piety. As Father Gemelli remarks:

He [Scotus] thus laid the central stone of the edifice of Franciscan piety and drew all souls towards Christ, for whom "omnia facta sunt." The love of the Crucified led Scotus, as it had done St. John the Evangelist and St. Paul, to consider Christ to be the center and the King of the whole universe. This marvellous conception of the universe gave to Franciscan life at once its dominant note. For it placed in a sacred light nature, history, and human events, viewing them as creatures and incidents, even though they might be rebellious, to play their part in contributing to the triumph of Christ, the Mediator. It made of every man a worker and a soldier, whether a volunteer or a conscript, in His divine Kingdom. For, as Raymond Lull put it, the whole universe was created in order to be Christian, and for no other purpose. The thought of St. John and St. Paul—passed through the crucible of the mind of Scotus—led to the most absolute theocentric conception of Christ as being the Divine, necessary Mediator between God and man.³

Then the study of Christ's absolute primacy will be of practical value to the people. The people must be brought back to Christ, their King. Rulers of nations and societies, as also individuals, are trying with might and main to dethrone Christ the King.⁴ Nothing is more conducive to bringing the people back to Christ than the preaching of His excellence to them. That is what St. Paul did in his letters, both to the Colossians and to the Hebrews. That is what our predecessors did, e. g., St. Bernardine of Siena.⁵

Finally, just as the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of Jesus kept the Franciscan school united and made it flourish and reach its highest glory in the middle of the nineteenth century, so the doctrine of Christ's absolute primacy should renew the spirit of the Franciscan school and restore it to its ancient glory.⁶

3. *The Franciscan Message to the World* (Burns, Oates, London, 1934), p. 282.

4. Pope Pius XII, *Summi Pontificatus* (N. C. W. C., 1939), p. 10.

5. Cf. Leonard Bello, O. F. M., Minister Generalis, *Litterae encyclicae*: "De omni universali Christi primatu atque regalitate," in *Acta Fratrum Minorum*, vol. 52 (1933), 294.

6. *Ibidem*, p. 303.

1. Pope Pius XI, Encyclical *Rite expiatis*, April 30, 1926.

2. *Opus Oxoniense*, lib. 3, dist. 13, q. 4, n. 9 (edit. Vives, vol. 14, p. 463).

By the universal and absolute primacy of Christ we mean that Christ was predestined by God absolutely and primarily for His own glory, then as the universal Scope of all creation, and as universal Exemplar of all creatures, and as universal Mediator of Angels and of men, in the order of nature and of grace and of glory from the very beginning, so that Christ is the universal Head of the entire Church; in fact, even all the inanimate creation is united in and through Him. Again, Christ Jesus was decreed as Redeemer after the fall of Adam, but primarily for His own glory, and only secondarily for the redemption of man. Thus Christ holds the first place in all things (Col. 1, 18) and in Him are all things summarized and brought to a head (Eph. 1, 10).

I. STATEMENT OF THE QUESTION

The first thesis, therefore, and the most important that we have to explain and prove is this: *God predestined Christ Jesus to be the Son of God absolutely and primarily for Christ's own glory, and that in the present economy of divine providence.*

Definition of Terms

God's Predestination: God is the one who predestines Christ; He is the efficient cause of the set of final causes we are going to study. Why did He decree the incarnation? *Predestination:* In the broad sense this means the *planning* of the incarnation on the part of God. In the strict sense, it is, according to Scotus: "Ordo electionis per voluntatem divinam alicujus creaturae intellectualis vel rationalis ad gratiam et gloriam."⁷ This definition is not unlike that of St. Bonaventure⁸ or of St. Thomas.⁹

Christ is the subject of this special predestination. At variance, however, with other predestinations in which the person is the subject, the Son of God in His divine nature is not the subject of predestination; for that implies a dependence and subjection.¹⁰ Christ is predestined, says the Seraphic Doctor, in His human nature:

In nobis est praedestinatio respectu naturae et etiam respectu personae, et magis proprie respectu personae quam naturae. In Christo autem est praedestinatio ratione naturae assumptae, quae sequitur divinam dispositionem, non ratione personae. . . .¹¹

Scotus expresses the same thought:

Et ita potest naturae huic praeoptare unionem istam in ordine ad gloriam, et non personae. Verum est tamen, quod in omnibus aliis ab isto praedestinatio respicit personam, quia in nullo alio praedestinavit Deus bonum naturae nisi praedestinando bonum personae; et ratio est, quia nulla natura praedestinabilis est non

7. *Op. Ox.*, lib. 1, d. 40, q. unica, n. 2 (vol. 10, p. 680b).

8. *In I Sent.*, d. 40 (Opera Omnia, edit. ad Aquas Claras, vol. 1, p. 702).

9. *Sum. theol.*, pars, q. 23, art. 2.

10. Cf. S. Bonaventura, *In III Sent.*, d. 7, art. 2., q. 1 (vol. 3, p. 177).

11. *Ibidem*, n. 3 (vol. 3, p. 181f).

personata personalitate creata nisi ista et ideo nec sic potest praedestinari sibi bonum nisi isti.¹²

The human nature in Christ was predestined to a personal union with the divine, which is something most singular, and obtains in this case only.¹³ Besides, the human nature is predestined to the supreme glory and grace consequent upon that personal union.¹⁴ No merits motivated this predestination to supreme glory; however, there was something which disposed the human nature to receive such great glory and that was the union.¹⁵

The object of our discussion, then, is Christ, the "opus summum Dei,"¹⁶ the "tam summum bonum in entibus,"¹⁷ precisely because of that marvellous union and that supreme glory and grace. He is the highest communication of divine goodness possible.¹⁸ For that reason He is loved by God more than all other creatures combined. On this score St. Bonaventure leaves no room for doubt:

Respondeo: Dicendum, quod Christus nominat personam in duabus naturis, quarum una est nobilitatis infinitae, et ipsa persona in se, et natura unita ratione personae habet quandam nobilitatem et dignitatem singularem et inestimabilem. Ergo absque calumnia potest concedi et dici, quod Deus magis dilexerit et diligat Christum quam totum genus humanum.¹⁹

For that reason, too, Christ can return to God the greatest glory through an act of infinite love and adoration. In the words of Scotus: "Vult se diligere ab illo qui potest eum summe diligere, loquendo de amore alicujus extrinseci."²⁰ Or, according to the Most Reverend Leonard Bello, O. F. M., the present Minister General, "Praedestinatur: tum uti summus adorator et glorificator almae Trinitatis, ratione ineffabilis ex Sacratissimo Corde procedentis dilectionis."²¹

Incarnation is a noun of action, and therefore denotes, first of all, the divine act whereby the Verbum assumed human nature, i. e., united Himself personally with the human nature. By extension it also means the result of that act, sc., the union that resulted, and that with or without the sanctifying grace and glory that followed the union. By a still further extension we speak of the entire life of Christ in this world and also in heaven as the incarnation, including all His acts and works. Now if we ask the motive of the incarnation, we take incarnation to stand for the entire Christ with all His grace and glory and acts, in this world and in heaven.

12. *Op. Ox.*, lib. 3, d. 7, q. 3, n. 1 (vol. 348b; and in Carolus Balic, O. F. M., *Joannis Duns Scoti Doctoris Subtilis et Mariani Theologiae Marianae elementa*, Sibenik in Jugoslavia, 1933, p. 3 f.). Cf. St. Thomas, *Sum. theol.*, pars 3, q. 24, art. 1-2; St. Augustine, *In Joan.*, tract. 105, n. 8 (Pat. lat., vol. 35, col. 1907).

13. *Op. Ox.*, lib. 3, d. 7, q. 3, n. 2 (vol. 14, p. 349a; Balic, p. 2 f.).

14. *Op. Ox.*, lib. 3, d. 13, q. 4, n. 9 (vol. 14, p. 463b) and q. 2, n. 12 (vol. 14, 449a).

15. *Reportata Parisiensis*, lib. 3, d. 7, q. 4 (MS. Ripoll, 53, fol. 22, from Hercedez, "Place de Christ dans la creation selon le b. Jean Duns Scot," in *La France Franciscaine*, vol. 19 (1936), 48.

16. Scotus, *Rep. Par.*, lib. 3, d. 7, q. 4, n. 4 (vol. 23, p. 303; Balic, p. 14).

17. *Idem*, *Op. Ox.*, lib. 3, d. 7, q. 3, dub. 1 (vol. 14, p. 355; Balic, p. 14).

18. Cf. Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter, *Divinum illud*.

19. *In III Sent.*, d. 32, art. 1, q. 5, ad 3 (vol. 3, 708b).

20. *Rep. Par.*, lib. 3, d. 7, q. 4 (vol. 23, p. 303; Balic, p. 14).

21. *Encyclica cit.*, p. 294b.

Distinction of Purposes

As in all works *ad extra*,²² God had to have a purpose in decreeing the incarnation, in predestining Christ. Every agent acts for a *finis*, and every *finis* is composed of two *inseparable* parts: the *finis qui*, or the *bonum* which the agent intends to acquire by his action; and the *finis cui*, or the subject for whom he intends the *bonum*. These two parts *make one finis*, not two; and they are inseparable: where there is the one there must also be the other. If a doctor heals a patient, the patient, and not the doctor, is the *finis cui* of health. And the money obtained by that cure is the *finis qui* of the doctor and not of the patient.²³ The *finis qui* must be intended for that *finis cui* which is able to receive that particular *finis qui*. The *finis qui* and the *finis cui* are complementary, but by no means interchangeable. *The finis qui of one set of purposes cannot be the finis qui of another set of purposes.*

An agent may will the same *bonum*, perhaps under a different aspect, to different subjects, and that in different degrees; i. e., one of those goods may really be the prime mover, and if it were not present, the agent would not act. Such an end is called the primary end; the other ends that may induce the agent to act are called secondary ends.

The end for which a work tends by its very nature is called the *finis operis* (e. g., a watch keeps time, a creature gives glory to God); the end which the agent intends other than the *finis operis* is the *finis operantis* (e. g., wearing clothes in order to show off). Quite often the *finis operis* is the primary *finis*, but this need not be. One can will a watch primarily to make money. However, the *finis operis* can never be excluded. By the very fact that a man wants to make money selling watches, he must want watches that keep time.

For Christ's Glory: Since God works all things *ad extra* for His own glory, that is, to communicate and manifest His own goodness,²⁴ He worked also the incarnation ultimately for that same reason. Here, however, we are not considering God's glory, but Christ's glory. We are asking whether God willed the incarnation for the glory of Christ; i. e., for Christ's own excellence, to love Him most of all and to receive the greatest love in return; to favor Him with the greatest grace and glory possible.

Primarily: Since the glory of Christ and His glorifying God is the *finis operis* of the incarnation, God could not have possibly excluded that when willing the incarnation. But we should like to know whether Christ was willed primarily for that glory, or whether He was willed primarily for the benefit of man. God, as a matter of fact, had various motives for willing the incarnation; e. g., to redeem man (Gal. 4:4), to be our teacher (Jn. 18:37), to give us an example in virtues (13:15). We maintain that Christ came primarily for His own sake and only secondarily for the sake of others. Many outside the Franciscan school and a few of the older Franciscans hold that Christ came primarily to redeem man.

22. Cf. St. Thomas, *Sum. theol.*, pars 1, q. 44, art. 4.

23. Cf. Pere Chrysostome, "Le motif de l'Incarnation: Explication dernière des meilleurs Thomistes," in *La France Franc.*, vol. 8 (1925) 158-164; and "Le motif de l'Incarnation d'après l'Angelicum et l'Ami du Clerge," in *La France Franc.*, vol. 15 (1932) 370.

24. St. Thomas, *Sum. theol.*, pars 1, q. 44, art. 4.

Priority in God

When speaking of primary and secondary motives on the part of God, we are speaking of priorities. Can there be priority in the decrees of a God who is most simple and immutable? First of all let us note that we are dealing not merely with an act of the intellect, but also of the will. God decreed the entire present order in one simple act. But that act of the divine will, even though in itself it is one and most simple, can still be considered virtually multiple according to our mode of reasoning, so that we may distinguish in that simple divine decree an order of priority and posteriority; i. e., that divine act, infinitely simple in its entity, corresponds to a plurality of acts which we would elicit in succession. In thus distinguishing various decrees we are really not putting a distinction in the divine will itself. It is the things decreed that are distinct and that have an order of relative excellence, for which there is a corresponding order of love and predestination on God's part.²⁵ God loves one thing more than another. For, His love causes things, and some things are more excellent than others. Hence this greater excellence must be caused by a greater love of God. By this, however, we do not say that God loves one thing more intensely than another.²⁶ Because God loves one thing more than another, He wills one thing for another. Therefore, the real basis for an order of priority is the *order of finality* among things decreed by God.²⁷ The end must be willed before the means, the cause before the effect.²⁸ St. Thomas has numerous examples where it is said that God willed one thing for another; e. g., God willed corporal creatures for the spiritual;²⁹ He willed nature for grace;³⁰ the divine Word assumed the body because of the soul.³¹ However, let us repeat, there is no priority of time or of nature in the will of God Himself. God's simple decree is like a photograph which was taken by a single shot; nevertheless the placing of the figures is according to some precedence.

That we may speak of a priority of God's decrees may be proved quite convincingly from the Bulla *Ineffabilis* of Pope Pius IX, where it is said that Mary was "preordained by one and the same decree with the incarnation of divine Wisdom."³² By that the Pope admits at least implicitly that the decree concerning Jesus and Mary is distinct from that of the others who were predestined, and it is certainly prior.³³

Theologians generally concede that there can be a priority in the decrees of God as explained above.³⁴ Molina, however, denied all priority of decrees

25. Jean Baptiste Bissen, O. F. M., "De praedestinatione absoluta Christi secundum D. Scotum expositio doctrinalis," in *Antonianum*, vol. 12 (1937), 17 f.

26. Cf. St. Thomas, *Sum. theol.*, pars 1, q. 20, art. 3.

27. Suarez, *De Incarnatione*, lib. 17, disp. 5, sect. 1, n. 1. 8. 30 (edit. Vives); cf. also Capreolus, *In III Sent.*, d. 1, q. 1, art. 3, ad 1.

28. Pere Chrysostome, O. F. M., *Le motif de l'Incarnation et les principaux Thomistes contemporains* (Cattier, Tours, 1921), p. 117.

29. *Sum. theol.*, pars 1, q. 65, art. 2.

30. *Ibid.*, pars 1, q. 62, art. 6, ad 1.

31. *Ibid.*, pars 3, q. 65, art. 5.

32. Cf. B. A. McKenna, *The Dogma of the Immaculate Conception* (Washington, D. C., 1929), ch. 1 "Ineffabilis Deus," p. 5.

33. Pere Chrysostome, *Thomistes contemporains*, p. 154.

34. Cf. Scotus, *Op. Os.*, lib. 3, d. 7, q. 3, dub. 1 (vol. 14, p. 354 f.; Balic, p. 5).

in order to solve the contradiction between the fact that Christ is the *finis* of all creation and that He came only to redeem.³⁵ However, in other places if there is question of finding and ordering divine decrees, He is second to none. The celebrated Billot, likewise, takes issue with Scotus on this point.³⁶

Absolutely: Christ was predestined absolutely. His existence does not depend on some contingent being or act, and especially not on the sinful act of man. It was not occasioned by the need of redemption on man's part. Scotus said: "The fall of man was not the cause of Christ's predestination. Even though neither man nor angel fell, nor other men besides Christ were to be created, still Christ would have been thus predestined."³⁷ That was a very emphatic way of saying that Christ was predestined first and absolutely in the present order. He does not thereby hold that Christ was actually ever to exist alone. He states explicitly that Christ was predestined as "Head of the celestial Court."³⁸

In the present Economy of Divine Providence: By approaching our subject from the angle of Christ's predestination, as Scotus approached it, we are *ipso facto* putting Christ into the present actual order. P. Bernardus a Bononio, O. F. M. Cap., wrote concisely and precisely on this point:

Quod ideo hic intendimus, non est aliqua sola mentis speculatio, sed motivum investigare praecipuum, seu causam finalem praecisam Incarnationis: an scilicet fuerit sola reparatio hominis lapsus, ita ut si homo non fuisset lapsus, nec Verbum fuisset incarnatum; an vero fuerit praecipue communicatio ipsius Dei ad hominem, manifestatio divinarum perfectionem; ita ut etiam antequam fuisset praevisum Adae peccatum, adhuc decrevisset Deus incarnari. Unde patet hanc quaestionem proprie procedere *de facto*, et de lege praesenti, quatenus non supponit in Deo alia decreta possibilis, sed illa sola, quae revera nunc in eo sunt. Non autem quaerit de possibili, an scilicet possibilis fuisset Verbi incarnatio etiam Ada non peccante.

The Christ who was conceived and born of the Virgin Mary, lived and died and now reigns gloriously in heaven, that same Christ was predestined absolutely for His own glory. We are taking the discussion out of the purely hypothetical order and are placing it into the present economy of divine Providence. Christ is actually supreme glorifier and adorer of the Most Blessed Trinity, and He will be such for all eternity, and that by virtue of that original decree of absolute predestination. In fact, even in regard to the secondary purpose of Christ's coming, *sc.*, the mediation there is an effect of His absolute predestination, *sc.*, the glory of the Angels and of Mary who was preserved from all sin. And we may say that the present work of sanctifying and of glorifying all men through Christ, is still the effect of their predestination in Christ before Adam's sin (cf. Eph. 1:3-6), even though it must now be redeemed first (cf. Eph. 1:7-9a).

Not a Hypothesis

Many of those who deny Christ's absolute primacy say that we are dealing with a purely hypothetical case. They seem to have been misled by the fact

35. In S. Thomam, pars 1, q. 23, 4-5.

36. De Verbo Incarnato (edit. 7, Apud Aedes Univ. Gregorianae, Romae, 1927),

p. 40.

37. Rep. Par., lib. 3, d. 7, 2, 4 (vol. 23, p. 303; Balic, p. 14).

38. Rep. Bavin., lib. 3, d. 7, q. 3 (Balic, p. 182).

that the question of the motive of the incarnation is often treated somewhat indirectly by answering the question of whether the Son of God would still have come, even though Adam had not sinned. Not even all followers of Scotus treat the matter directly from the viewpoint of Christ's predestination.

Scotus considers the deduction of Christ's coming, even though Adam had not sinned, quite logical, and so do his followers. Frassen, for instance, has the general section: "De causa finali et motiva Incarnationis,"³⁹ under which he treats the question: "Utrum si Adam non peccasset, Filius Dei non minus esset incarnatus."⁴⁰ And as argument he adduces the truth that Christ was predestined absolutely. Therefore, that conditional sentence means that Christ was so absolutely predestined that no contingent being or act, much less a sinful act, could influence Christ's coming. Consequently even if Adam had not sinned Christ would still have come; in fact, more so, because sin is really the only thing that might have motivated God to cancel the plan about Christ and creation. The absolute predestination of Christ in the present order could not be stated more emphatically than by that conditional clause. The apodasis is real: Christ was actually decreed before sin. The protasis is unreal: Adam actually sinned. The protasis is merely a contingent circumstance that cannot effect the absolute truth of the apodasis. If Christ was predestined absolutely, then He must have become incarnate under any circumstance, and no creature nor act of a creature could impede His coming. Consequently, it is perfectly legitimate to add an unreal protasis and say, even if this thing or that had not taken place Christ would still have come. That is altogether different from a pure futurible, in which both protasis and apodasis are unreal; e. g., if you had done penance, he would have converted. You did not do penance, nor did he convert. But Christ was actually predestined, though Adam had not sinned. It is like saying, Christ is so absolutely predestined that He would have come in spite of Adam's sin. There is nothing absurd about such a hypothetical statement. If Christ actually existed in the mind of God before sin as the Mediator of angels and of our First Parents in paradise, and, therefore, before sin was foreseen (as we hope to prove), He was actually their Mediator. Hence, if this mediatorship of Christ was not an absurd fiction on God's part, Christ would have had to come even if there were no sin. Suppose a young man decides to become a doctor in a town where there are no sick people. He wants to make a name for himself by preserving these people in good health. However, before he actually gets there most of the people fall sick. He now decides to go there to cure them and after that to preserve their health. Surely we can say that even if no one had fallen sick he would still have come as a doctor, even though he would then have come with preventive medicines alone, and not with remedial medicines.

Parallel Case

There are a number of similar deductions in St. Thomas' *Summa* where he discusses questions of what would have happened in the state of inno-

39. Claudius Frassen, Ord. Min., *Scotus Academicus* (Romae, 1720), p. 242b.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 243.

cence had it continued. A question that is particularly to the point is that of whether there would have been generations in the state of innocence. With St. Augustine he answers affirmatively, arguing from the great good that generation is and from its purpose.⁴¹ We can conclude, then, that the hypothetical clause, "If Adam had not sinned," really presupposes Christ's absolute predestination. That consequence is not "vicious and erroneous."⁴²

Impassible Body of Christ

Those who hold Christ's absolute predestination make the further deduction that even if Adam had not sinned, Christ would have come and that coming would have been in an impassible body. There are those who ridicule also this deduction.⁴³ However, like the deduction from which it proceeds, it is a legitimate, even though not so direct, inference from the fact of Christ's absolute predestination and from what we know of the gift of impassibility given to Adam in paradise. Suffering is the result of sin alone. Christ took on a passible body merely to expiate for sin,⁴⁴ and as soon as that work was finished He made Himself impassible. In the state of innocence there would have been no such reason for a passible body; therefore, there is only one other possibility, an impassible body.

Scotus went further and said that Christ's body would have been glorious from the beginning because His glorified soul called for a glorified body unless there was a grave reason to the contrary, such as redemption.⁴⁵ However, that deduction is not so certain. One might wonder if Christ would not have led an ordinary life externally while on this earth, impassible indeed, as Adam was, but not in a glorified body until He was to leave this world.

Our adversaries think they can prove that Christ was not predestined absolutely because He actually came in a passible flesh. They argue something like this: Only that which actually takes place in the order of execution, was preordained by God. But Christ assumed a passible body. Therefore there was a decree only to that effect, and no decree to come in an impassible body, as far as the present order is concerned. Consequently, if Adam had not sinned, there would have been no Christ at all.⁴⁶

They fail to distinguish between two things: sc., the substance of Christ's coming, and that for absolute primary and secondary motives, and the mode of His coming, depending on the secondary motives. God can decree something absolutely *quoad substantiam* and conditionally *quoad modum et motum*, and finally absolutely *quoad modum* also when the condition is verified. And there is here no question of a change on the part of the immutable will of God, no more than for any other conditional volition on God's part. We can prove this point by *a pari* cases. Let me note though that some of the *a pari* cases adduced by some authors, do not seem to be really *a pari*. Some

41. *Sum. theol.*, pars 1, q. 98, art. 1; cf. pars 1, qq. 96-101.

42. P. Carmelo, O. F. M. Cap., argues against it in "De Incarnationis motivo ac de Christi Domini Primatu," in *Collectanea Franciscana*, vol. 7 (1937), p. 176 and 344.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 345.

44. Scotus, *Rep. Par.*, lib. 3, d. 7, q. 4 (vol. 23, p. 303; Balic, p. 15).

argue that just as Adam was decreed immortal in the beginning, and mortal after the sin, so Christ was decreed impassible and then, passible.⁴⁷ But the parity does not hold. For in that case, and in other similar cases, only one of the alternatives is willed conditionally, the other is actual and absolute: Adam was absolutely willed immortal from the beginning, and conditionally mortal; then after his sin, absolutely mortal and conditionally immortal (immortality of heaven). But in the case of Christ both alternatives are willed conditionally at one time. In any case in which we have alternatives conditioned by the free act of a creature, we have an *a pari* argument.

Examples

Adam *quoad substantiam*, i. e., body and soul and grace, was willed absolutely from the beginning; his glorious body or his reprobation were willed conditionally from the beginning. His glorious body was willed absolutely at death. Likewise, every case of predestination is *a pari*; God gives everyone sufficient grace absolutely; but the salvation or reprobation is willed conditionally, depending on the final outcome. After death he wills either salvation or reprobation absolutely. It seems to me that to deny the possibility of Christ's predestination absolutely *quoad substantiam* and conditionally *quoad modum*, is to deny the possibility of predestination or reprobation *post praevisa merita*, for that involves an absolute and a conditional decree.

Again, Adam would certainly have had children even in the state of innocence.⁴⁸ God, therefore, preordained these children absolutely to exist. But since they would have been born immortal in the state of innocence,⁴⁹ and since they were actually born mortal, God could not have willed them absolutely either way before the sin of Adam; so He had to will them conditionally immortal or mortal, depending on the state in which the human race would be at their birth. After their birth or after Adam's sin they would be decreed absolutely one way or the other. The case of the doctor given above would illustrate the point. St. Lawrence of Brindisi gives us a number of illustrations taken from incidents in Sacred Scripture.⁵⁰

Retrospect

We shall now apply those principles to Christ. He was predestined absolutely to become incarnate in order to glorify God, and that purpose of His coming would be fulfilled regardless of the mode of His coming; sc., whether in an impassible or a passible body. So the fact that He did not have an impassible body at the beginning of His life is no argument that He came only by force of the decree that settled the mode of His coming in a passible body. Again, Christ was predestined to come as Mediator of Angels and of

47. J-B. Petit-Bornand, O. F. M. Cap., *Proludium de Primatu Domini nostri Jesu Christi et Causa Motiva Incarnationis*; translated from the French by P. Ambrosius a Saldo, O. F. M. Cap. (Barcinonae, 1902), p. 133 f.

48. St. Thomas, *Sum. theol.*, pars 1, q. 98, art. 1.

49. *Ibid.*, q. 97.

50. Cf. *Mariale* (Opera Omnia, Ex Officina Typographica Seminarii, Patavii, 1928), vol. 1, p. 81.

men; He was to give them grace and glorify them, and He was to do this before the foreknowledge and permission of sin. The effect of this decree, too, actually took place when the angels received grace and were glorified through the mediation of Christ in the period of their trial, and when Adam and Eve in paradise received grace through His mediation. That grace and glory were given prior to the sin of man. So, again, from the fact that Christ actually began His life in a passible body, we cannot argue that He was not predestined absolutely. Moreover, since God knew that angels and men were free beings and might lose the grace given them, He predestined Christ to be the Savior (Preserver) of those who would never lose it; *sc.*, the good angels and Mary, and the Redeemer of those who would lose it and would be redeemed again through God's mercy. And so He predestined Christ Jesus conditionally to come either in an impassible body if no one would have sinned before His coming, or in a passible body if some sinned and would have to be redeemed. Finally after the actual fall of Adam was foreseen and permitted, God predestined Christ absolutely to come in a passible flesh and redeem man. However, it is clear that this last decree did not cancel the first absolute decree; it merely modified that decree as far as His mode of coming was concerned.

Consequently there is no substantial change and no substantially new decree is needed. The original decree continues in full force both in regard to its primary and in regard to its secondary absolute ends. It is only slightly modified as to the mode because of the secondary conditioned purpose of His coming. This is really only a slight addition; for Christ was passible only for the short space of His earthly career. As soon as the work of redemption was consummated in *actu primo*, He assumed a glorified body. And even during His mortal life He was glorified on Mount Thabor. It seems therefore that Christ could be passible or impassible at will. In fact, He asserted: "No one takes it (My life) from Me, but I lay it down of Myself" (Jn. 10:18). That is the doctrine of the Fathers.⁵¹ The so-called change from an impassible to a passible body is not so difficult, nor so very important in this discussion. P. Chrysostom, O. F. M., suggests that we omit the discussion altogether. Certainly more important is the change of the motive of the secondary ends; *sc.*, from pure Mediator to Redeemer.

Intermediate Ends

That the discussion of the motive of the incarnation deals with primary and secondary ends, as explained above, was admitted by all theologians, as far as I know, until 1937 when P. Carmelo, O. F. M. Cap., advanced a new theory for reconciling the differences between Scotists and Thomists.⁵² With the Scotists he holds that Christ is the *finis* of all creation and the first predestined; and with the Thomists he holds that Christ came merely to redeem. How does he explain that contradiction? He insists that we distinguish the

various meanings of the word *incarnation*. He claims that incarnation means: 1) the coming of Christ into this world; 2) the mortal life of Christ in this world; 3) the eternal life of Christ in heaven; 4) the existence of Christ simply, including his life on earth and in heaven.⁵³ Let us note, first of all, that "Christ's coming into this world" is not philosophical enough when giving a definition of incarnation, because it might mean the mystery of the Annunciation or the mystery of Christmas. Moreover, I don't know if it was ever necessary, or even advisable, to speak of Christ's glorious life in heaven as the incarnation, except the need that P. Carmelo has to get in his theory. Below we shall show that Christ's glorious heaven began in the womb of Mary. (Cf. above for the meanings of incarnation.)

Now P. Carmelo asserts, but does not prove, that the incarnation in the sense of the glorious life of Christ in heaven was for the glory of Christ, and in that life He is the *finis* of all creation; on the other hand, the incarnation in the first and second meaning given, is for the redemption of man.⁵⁴

P. Carmelo seems to think that it is necessary to reconcile the opinions of the Scotists and Thomists.⁵⁵ Since when, may we ask, need these two opinions be reconciled? Were the two schools reconciled in regard to the Immaculate Conception? Yes, by a dogmatic definition in favor of Scotus. The texts of Sacred Scripture and of the Fathers can be explained by primary and secondary purposes of the incarnation. The opinions of the Scotists and Thomists cannot be reconciled.

Refutation

Certainly, P. Carmelo fails to reconcile them. He does not touch the point of the controversy about the final motive. He thinks it is a question of comparing the various stages in the life of Christ with each other; whereas it is a question of whether the incarnation in his fourth meaning, *sc.*, the entire earthly and glorified life combined of Christ, was decreed primarily for others, more precisely, for the redemption of man, or primarily for Christ's own sake. Certainly, one may discuss the relation between Christ's life on earth and His life in heaven; but that does not touch the question of the motive of the incarnation as such. I can still ask: Was the incarnation from the conception in Mary's hallowed womb until and including His eternal moment of heavenly glory, primarily for man's redemption, or primarily for Christ's glory? It is not a question of the relation between the proximate and ultimate *finis* in Christ's life, but of the primary and secondary *finis*.

Broad Statements

Besides, his insistence on the distinctions in the incarnation, and his failure to distinguish between primary and secondary ends, cause him to make some rather broad statements. For example:

53. *Ibid.*, p. 164.

54. *Ibid.*, pp. 165 and 167.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 353.

51. St. John Chrysostom, *Hom.* 60, n. 2 in *Joan.* (Pat. graec., vol. 59, col. 529f.).
St. Cyril of Alexandria, *In Joan.* 10, 18, lib. 7-8 (Pat. graec., vol. 74, col. 10).
St. Augustine, *In Joan.* tract. 47, n. 11 (Pat. lat., vol. 35, col. 1758 f.); and *De civitate Dei*, lib. 14, c. 9, n. 13 edit. B. Dombart-(Teubnerus, Lipsiae, 1918), p. 22 f.
52. *Op. cit.*, *Coll. Franc.*, vol. 7 (1937), 161-178; 342-356.

Significante voce "Incarnatio" Christi in hunc mundum adventum, vel vitam temporalem ipsius, morte crudelissima absolutam, certo certius Incarnatio ad redemptionem humani generis fuit ordinata.⁵⁶

Now if by that he means that the coming of Christ on earth and the life on earth had for its purpose the redemption alone, the assertion must be denied. Even according to the Thomists, Christ's life on earth was secondarily for His own glory; and of course, Scotists hold it was primarily for Christ's own glory. Moreover, if he means that the work of the redemption itself was not for Christ's glory, he errs. The work of the redemption was at least secondarily for Christ's own glory even in this life already — all admit that. St. Lawrence of Brindisi maintains that even this work of redemption was willed primarily for Christ's own glory and not for man's benefit.

Again, P. Carmelo asserts:

...dicente vero vitam illam quam in caelis nunc habet atque aeternaliter habiturus est, exprimente totalem Christi existentiam, uno verbo, ipsum Christum, non solum non fuit ordinata ad redemptionem, sed redemptio cum omnibus, quae secum fert, adventus, vita temporalis, plagae, mors in cruce . . . in Christum ordinantur, in ipsius aeternam gloriosamque in caelis vitam.⁵⁷

This passage possibly indicates that the life of Christ on earth, the redemption, is for Christ's glorious life in heaven only. It is true that Christ's life on earth merited for Him a glorious Body and a glorious Name (Cf. Phil. 2:8-10; Lk. 24:26; also St. Thomas, *Summa*, 3, q. 59, art. 3). But that was only external glory (*Summa*, 2, q. 20, art. 3), and it was already due to Christ because of beatific Vision which was not merited. Christ's heaven began in the all-sacred womb of His Mother. From the very first moment He enjoyed beatific glory, and in no way merited that by His life on earth. From the first moment of His conception He was the *Opus Summum*, for which all created things were made. Consequently also the redemption was for Christ's glory on earth. P. Carmelo writes:

Intellegunt (Scotus and his followers), ut patet (?), vitam Christi mortalem atque in oblivionem tradunt praecipuam existentiae Christi partem, vitam qua fruatur in caelis.

The *ut patet* that the Scotists restrict their motive to the mortal life of Christ, is utterly false. They take into consideration the first moment of His conception and include the never-ending life of glory in heaven; and according to them the *primary* motive of that entire life of Christ is in the glory of Christ. Moreover, they need not distinguish between Incarnation and incarnation, because Christ began His glorious life at the first moment of His life. The Hypostatic Union demanded that glory.⁵⁸ Already for that first moment must we be able to answer the question of "Cur Deus Homo?" And our answer is: Primarily for His own glory and secondarily to glorify angels and men.

If by his assertion, P. Carmelo means that Christ's glorious life in heaven is in no way for the redemption, I again beg to differ. Christ's life in

56. *Ibid.*, p. 165.

57. *Ibid.*

58. Scotus, *Rep. Barcin.*, lib. 3, d. 7, q. 3 (Balic, p. 184).

heaven, as also His life on earth, is primarily for His own glory; but it is secondarily for the sake of creatures, for whom He is Mediator. Even the glorious Christ in heaven is still Mediator, and will be Mediator for all eternity because He is Mediator of our glory, and our glory will be eternal. As glory is above grace so Christ's mediation in heaven surpasses His mediation on earth.

That Christ's glorious life is in no way for the redemption as such, must be distinguished, too. P. Carmelo writes: "Absurdum pariter est Christum in caelis nunc regnantem redemptionem nostram operari. Redemptio peracta perfectaue fuit ipsius morte crudelissima in crucis patibulo."⁵⁹ It is quite true that the work of the redemption was accomplished on the Cross, but that was only in *actu primo*. It must still be applied to men. In the Encyclical *Studiorem ducem* of Pope Pius XI we read that St. Thomas wrote well about the Redemption of the human race by Jesus Christ, and about that redemption's being *continued* by the Church and through the sacraments, both of which St. Thomas calls certain relics of the divine incarnation.⁶⁰ But it is really Christ who is the chief Minister of the sacraments; so it is He, gloriously reigning in heaven, who is continuing the work of the redemption. From heaven He distributes the graces He merited while on earth. In heaven He continues as Priest: "But He, because He continues forever, has an everlasting priesthood. Therefore He is able at all times to save those who come to God through Him, since He lives always to make intercession for them" (Hebr. 7:25). After the last judgment the redemption also in *actu secundo* will cease; but the effect of that redemption will be eternal and Christ will be our eternal Mediator, our eternal High-Priest. In this sense Christ in glory will be eternally for creatures, but only secondarily; primarily He is for Himself.

II. THE ARGUMENTS

The first arguments we shall take from Christ's triple causal relation to other creatures. We shall prove that Christ is the universal *finis*, the universal Exemplar, and the universal Mediator of all creatures. And from that fact we shall show that Christ had to be decreed prior to all creatures, and that His existence does not depend on theirs in the sense that they can impede His existence. After that we shall discuss a few arguments taken from reason, at least seemingly so.

ARGUMENT 1

Christ is the final cause of all created things in the order of nature and of grace and of glory, including angels and men and all other creatures. These things would never have been created but for Christ, to whom they must give glory. But if Christ is the final cause of all things, then He is the first work of God *ad extra* and He is decreed absolutely for His own glory.

59. *Op. cit.*, p. 177.

60. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, vol. 15 (1923), 319.

a. Final Causes Must Be First

Finis Is First

Both of these premises need be proved. Let us prove the minor first. Right order demands that the end be in the mind of the intelligent agent before the things that are intended. That is a philosophical axiom. It must be so with metaphysical necessity, for the end sets the agent in motion and without the end there is no action at all. But that means that Christ Himself had to be first in God's mind. For, as explained above, every *finis* is composed of a *finis qui* and a *finis cui*. Now if Christ's glory is the *finis qui*, then the only subject capable of receiving that glory is Christ Himself. We cannot speak of the glory of Christ as the *finis qui* and the redemption of man as the *finis cui*; no more than we can speak of the fame of the physician as the *finis qui*, and the cure of the patient as the *finis cui*. The fame of the physician is for the physician, and he must exist to receive it; the glory of Christ is for Christ, and He must exist, at least intentionally, to receive it. Consequently, if, as we hope to prove conclusively, Christ's glory is the final cause of all creation, then not only the glory of Christ, but Christ Himself, must be in the mind of God before all creatures who will be created for His glory and to whom they owe their existence. *A fortiori* He must be present intentionally before the sinful acts of those creatures. Consequently, He is decreed first and absolutely; but if He is decreed first and absolutely, it must be for His own sake, because no other creature exists as yet.

Another Proof

It is impossible for Christ to be willed primarily as the *finis* of all creation and still become incarnate essentially and primarily as Mediator of man from the beginning of creation, much less only as Redeemer after the fall, on condition of the fall. In other words, it is impossible for God to will the universe of creatures first and then will Christ as the *finis* of that universe; it is more impossible for God to will the universe of creatures and even foresee their sinful acts, and only then will Christ as the final cause of all creatures from the beginning. Christ cannot be the final cause of all creation and still be willed primarily for the redemption of man.⁶¹

Contradiction

The greater good cannot be the *finis* of another and still be willed primarily for that other. For, the *finis* is first in the mind of the agent. So if the greater is the *finis* of the less, then the greater must be in the mind of the agent before the less, and there is no longer a question of the greater existing merely for the less. That would be a contradiction. The end is first and sets the other causes in motion; but if the greater is the *finis* of the less, then the less would not exist if there were no greater.

61. Pere Chrysostome, O. F. M., "Le motif de l'Incarnation d'après l'Angelicum et l'Ami du Clerge," in *La France Franc.* vol. 15 (1932), pp. 366 and 373.

If Christ exists intentionally in God's mind prior to all creatures as the end of all, then He does so independently of sin; and there is no longer any question of His coming merely for the redemption from sin. Once in the mind of God prior to all creatures, always there; and no subsequent contingent being or act, least of all sinful acts, could interfere with His existence as such. Again, there would be a contradiction in this, that Christ as *finis* of all would be the *raison d'être* of all creatures, and that He would still not exist except for sin. "Christ as end of all" means: If there were no Christ there would be no creatures. And on the other hand, "Christ only at the occasion of sin" means "no sin, no Christ." If, then, there were no sin (men would still exist), there would be no Christ, but if no Christ there would be no creatures.⁶² To put that contradiction in other words, "Christ only for the redemption" means that Christ was intended only after the fall. But "Christ as the *finis* of all" means that Christ is in the mind of God prior to all creatures and absolutely.

Glory from All

If Christ is the *finis* of all creation, He must receive glory from all creatures from the very beginning of creation, and the subject of a *finis* must exist at least intentionally to receive that *finis*; and that is precisely the type of *finis* that Tradition attributes to Christ. But if Christ had been willed by God only after the fall, he would have been present in God's mind only after the fall and He would not have been present in God's mind at the creation of the angels and of man in paradise and of all creatures before the fall; He would have had no relation with these whatsoever, not even in the mind of God, before the fall. Consequently He could not have been their *finis*. It would have been metaphysically impossible for Christ to have the glory of creation from the beginning, including the glory of the angels and of Adam in paradise, if He was willed only for the redemption. Nothing that preceded the fall could have been willed for Christ who as yet did not exist even intentionally. These things would be excluded from Christ's glory and He would not be the universal final cause of all creation that Tradition claims for Him.

Therefore Christ was willed by God from the very beginning as the First and Absolute End of all creation, and consequently primarily for His own glory.

Extrinsic Authority for the Minor

As for the value of this argument from the end to priority and absolute existence, we have the testimony of all those who hold the absolute primacy of Christ. St. Lawrence of Brindisi puts it in the form of a contradiction as we did above:

Si igitur non Christus propter Adam, sed Adam propter Christum creatus fuit, sicut non vir propter mulierem, sed mulier propter virum facta fuit; nam caput mulieris vir, caput autem viri Christus, ergo etiam si Adam non peccasset, venisset

62. *Ibid.*, p. 366.

in mundum Christus; alioquin si non peccasset Adam, nec creatus fuisset mundus, cum omnia propter Christum creata sint.⁶³

Frassen argues formally from the *finis* to priority:

Ille primo intenditur in ordine creationis, propter quem omnia creata sunt et condita: sed omnia creata et condita sunt propter Christum: . . . Major patet; finis enim prius intenditur ab operante quam ea quae sunt ad et propter finem: Minor vero probatur . . . (He cites Col. 1, 16; 1 C. 3, 23; Hebr. 2, 10; and some Fathers).⁶⁴

Again, he writes:

Concedunt adversarii, quod ordinate volens prius vult finem, quam ea quae sunt ad finem: sed Christus est finis immediatus omnium creaturarum, tam ordinis naturae, quam ordinis gratiae: igitur prius intenditur a Deo, quam creaturae caeterae, cujuscumque sint ordinis.⁶⁵

Suarez, too, admits that the argument from *finis* to first in this question is valid:

Sumendus ergo est hic ordo ad divinam voluntatem ordinantem unum ad aliud, et volentem unum propter aliud, . . . proprie, ut unum sit propter aliud. Et juxta haec, illud intelligitur prius in voluntate divina, quod est tanquam ratio et finis alterius; illud vero posterius, quod est propter aliud, licet in re ipsa prius intelligamus Deum exsequi medium quam finem.⁶⁶

St. Thomas himself states that we can argue from the final cause of a thing to priority, when he writes: "Quanto aliquid est melius in effectibus, tanto est prius in intentione agentis."⁶⁷

St. Cyril of Alexandria, arguing against the heretics who deny the divinity of the Verbum, has this to say: "Si propter nos Filius factus est, primi nos erimus apud Deum; sic enim Deus nos primo, deinde Filium propter nos intendisse videtur."⁶⁸

An Objection

Garrigou-Lagrangé tries to weaken the above arguments by appealing to the principle of mutual causality which he found in St. Thomas.⁶⁹ True, there is such a thing as mutual relation between causes: The acorn produces the oak and the oak produces the acorn. The body is for the soul and the soul is for the body; Christ the Redeemer is for man, and man is for Christ. But Garrigou-Lagrangé misses the point of St. Thomas, who says that the causes are mutually related but under different aspects: A painful cutting (as efficient cause) is related to a cure; and a cure (as *finis*) is related to the painful cutting; but not with the same priority, because the *finis* is always prior to the action of the agent. Most of all is there no simultaneity of mutual causes if the terms are contradictory as we have shown above.

63. *Mariale*, vol. 1, p. 81.

64. *Op. cit.*, p. 247.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 251.

66. *De Incarnatione*, lib. 17, disp. 5, sect. 1, n. 12.

67. *Contra Gentiles*, lib. 1, c. 44, n. 1.

68. *Thesaurus*, assert. 15 (Pat. graec., vol. 75, col. 253).

69. "Causae ad invicem sunt causae," in *Angelicum*, vol. 9 (1932), 21-47. Cf. the refutation by P. Chrysostome, cited in footnote 61.

b. Christ Is the Final Cause of All Creation

Franciscan Tradition

Having proved the minor of our argument, we will now show that Christ is the Final Cause of all creation according to the fairly unanimous Franciscan tradition; and that that is confirmed by nearly all theologians, even by those who oppose the primacy of Christ; that it is the doctrine of the Fathers; and finally that it receives supreme approbation by an indulged prayer which mentions this doctrine explicitly. We shall quote some outstanding authorities from the Franciscan school. Frassen was quoted above. The Most Reverend Leonard Bello, O. F. M., Min. Gen., in his encyclical wrote up the doctrine chiefly from the viewpoint of Franciscan tradition, and he has this to say: Christ was predestined

tum uti ratio essendi necnon et causa finalis stricte intellecta;⁷⁰ . . . (and) totius divinae oeconomiae causa finalis necnon Curiae caelestis caput mysticum constituitur. . . Ipse quoque mundus materialis non nisi ad laudem Christi creatus fuit. . .⁷¹

St. Bonaventure taught that Christ is the *finis* and primarily intended, even though he holds that Christ was decreed only because of the Redemption:

Ad illud quod objicitur propter quod unumquodque tale et illud magis, dicendum quod illud verum est, secundum quod propter dicitur habitudinem causae finalis principalis, non prout dicitur habitudinem inducentis. Humanum vero genus respectu incarnationis et nativitatis Christi non fuit ratio finaliter movens, sed quodam modo inducens. Non enim Christus ad nos finaliter ordinatur, sed nos finaliter ordinamur ad ipsum, quia non caput propter membra, sed membra propter caput. Ratio tamen inducens ad tantum bonum fuit reparationis remedium, sicut in principio hujus libri fuit ostensum (d. 1, art. 2, q. 2). Sed ex hoc non sequitur, quod genus humanum sit melius, quia minus bonum potest inducere ad faciendum majus bonum.⁷²

He failed to see the contradiction in his position. This seems to be the beginning of Cajetan's distinction.

St. Bernardine remarks:

Secundo ratio, quare Deus cuncta creavit, est propter Christi exaltationem. Nam principalis creatura in creatione intenta a Deo ab aeterno fuit, quam ipse praedestinavit ad personalem unionem; et cum ipsa persona Christi sit omnium summa in ordine gratiae, qui superat ordinem naturae, ad ipsum Deum, qui in omnibus primatum tenet, et ad ejus gloriam et honorem omnia ordinavit, ut ex omnibus bonis et malis accrescat Deo-Homini Jesu Christo. . .⁷³

If there were any doubt about this *omnia* referring to the entire creation, that is removed by the fact that St. Bernardine teaches that Christ is Mediator of the angels from the beginning. Cf. below.

Joannes de Ovando, Ord. Min., states:

70. *Op. cit.*, p. 294.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 300b.

72. *In III Sent.*, d. 32, art. 1, q. 5, ad 3 (vol. 3, p. 706a-b).

73. "De universali regno Jesu Christi," Sermo 54, art. 1 (Opera Omnia, vol. 1, p. 316).

Non solum Christus Dominus est primus omnium praedestinatorum, sed est caput et *finis omnium operum Dei*, ita ut omnia alia quae Deus fecit *ex amore Christi fecerit, in quem cuncta ordinavit*.⁷⁴

St. Lawrence of Brindisi is rich in this regard, and Scripture scholar that he was, he quotes a number of passages to prove his point:

Plus diligit rex unicum filium, quam omnes servos. Non fuit praedestinator Christus propter Electos; sed Electi omnes propter Christum, in gloriam Christi. Sic Paulus ad Eph. 1, 3-6. . . . Ubi manifeste docet Paulus quod omnes Electi in gloriam Christi praedestinati sunt. Prima autem ad Cor. 3, 22-23 . . . , i. e., omnia propter vos sunt, vos autem propter Christum. Nam omnes sumus Christi servi, *etiam Angeli*: Eph. 3, 10: In nomine Jesu omne genu caelestium flectitur. Et ad Hebr. 1, 2 ait: Quem constituit heredem universorum, per quem fecit et saecula. Scribens etiam ad Colossenses docet quod propter Christum omnia creata sunt; ait enim; 1, 15-17. . . .⁷⁵

He writes further:

Fundamentum Christus est totius creaturae, totius gratiae, totius gloriae, *quoniam finis est omnium, propter quem omnia creata sunt*.⁷⁶

And from the same source:

Nec solum prima est creatura praedestinata, sed etiam causa . . . finalis praedestinationis Sanctorum. Sic Paulus ait: Rom. 8, 29. . . . Ubi declarat Paulus Christum ab aeterno fuisse causam . . . finalem . . . (praedestinationis), ubi ait: "Ut sit ipse primogenitus," dignitate et honore, "in multis fratribus"; id est inter omnes Electos Dei, quos in filios adoptavit."⁷⁷

Lastly he writes:

Deinde ob Christi gloriam: Hic erit magnus et Filius Altissimi vocabitur. *Ad honorem et gloriam Christi Deus universa creavit*. Sicut enim ob arcam testamenti augustissimum totius templi aedificium maximis ac pene infinitis sumptibus fabricatum fuit a Salomone; ita propter Christum, qui arca Divinitatis est, totus creatus fuit mundus, coelum et terra, cum omnibus quae coeli ambitu continentur. Quaecunque sunt in regno, regi serviunt, propter regem sunt; Christus autem ait: "Data est mihi omnis potestas in coelo et in terra." Ut Christi servi essent, creavit angelos in coelo; ut Christi imago esset, formavit hominem in terra. Sic enim Paulus vocavit Adam imaginem Futuri (Rom. 5, 14); sic ad majorem Christi gloriam permisit hominem a diabolo tentari et vinci, ut Christus, salutem humani generis operando, ostenderet infinitos thesauros divinae virtutis suae.⁷⁸

Non-Franciscan Theologians

That Christ is the End of all created things is the doctrine also of those outside of the Franciscan school and even of those who deny the absolute primacy of Christ, as we shall see.

Suarez tells us:

Dico ergo primo, Deum primaria intentione, et prima voluntate qua voluit se creaturis communicare, voluisse mysterium incarnationis; et Christum Dominum

74. *In III Sent.*, d. 7, q. 3, art. 2, concl. 3 (Valentiae, 1597).

75. *Mariale*, vol. 1, p. 79.

76. *Ibid.*, p. 80.

77. *Ibid.*

78. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

Deum simul et hominem, ut esset caput et *finis omnium* divinorum operum *sub ipso Deo* (and he cites authorities for that).⁷⁹

De Lugo says of Christ and of Mary:

Sicut Deus igitur omnia condidisse ex complacentia in uno Christo, et *ideo* Christus dicitur finis creaturarum; ita cum proportione dicitur omnia caetera condidisse ex affectu erga Virginem Deiparam, adeoque ipsam esse quodammodo finem creaturarum.⁸⁰

Gonet, who denies the absolute primacy, is quite emphatic in saying that Christ is the *finis* of all:

Christus fuit a Deo intentus ut finis non solum praedestinationis hominum et angelorum, sed etiam creationis eorum. Et patet, quia rectus intendendi et providendi ordo postulat, ut caput non sit propter membra, sed e contra membra ad caput ut ad finem ordinentur; sed Christus praedestinator est caput omnium praedestinatorum; erga juxta rectum et consonum modum providendi, fuit praedestinator ut praedestinatorum finis. . . . Cum in humanitate Christi, speciali quodam et ineffabili modo, plenitudo divinitatis inhabitet, Christus jure merito omnium creaturarum, et totius ordinis naturae et gratiae, subindeque omnium praedestinatorum finis censendus est.⁸¹

St. Francis de Sales writes:

It was in consideration of this most desirable fruit that the vine of the great sovereign of heaven has been planted; that is to say, that the Universe has been planted.⁸²

Fathers of the Church

I shall quote only a few of the Fathers. That is really the part of the proof that should be developed most of all. We ought to search the Fathers from beginning to end for proofs that Christ is the final Cause of all creation. Here are a few citations. The first is from St. Athanasius:

Verumtamen sic etiam vos (Ariani) possumus refellere. Si factam naturam volens Deus creare, deque ipsa facienda deliberans, Filium secundum vos excogitat et creat, ut nos per ipsum postea producat, quantum proferre audetis impietatem animadvertite: Primo enim inde sequitur, ut ipse Filius nostri potius causa factus fuerit, quam nos propter ipsum. Nec enim nos propter eum creati sumus, sed ipse propter nos factus est; ita ut ille nobis potius habeat gratiam, quam nos illi, ut et mulier viro. Etenim, ut ait Scriptura (1 Cor. 11, 9): "non est creatus vir propter mulierem, sed mulier propter virum." Igitur quemadmodum vir imago et gloria Dei est, mulier autem gloria viri, ita nos Dei imago et ad ejus gloriam facti sumus ut existeremus; at Dei Verbum non ut existeret, sed nostri gratia, instar instrumenti, factum est, proindeque non nos propter illud, sed ipsum propter nos existit. [Then St. Athanasius answers:] Annon vero qui haec vel tantum cogitant omnium dementissimi sunt habendi? Nam si propter nos factum est Verbum, nobis certe prius non est apud Deum. Neque enim cum illud in se ipso haberet, de nobis creandis deliberavit Deus; sed potius cum nos in se ipse haberet, de suo Verbo, ut illi dicitur, producendo deliberavit. Quod si verum est, forte nec omnino Pater Filium voluit. Nam non ipsum volens creavit, sed nos volens ipsum propter nos creavit. Siquidem eum post nos excogitavit, adeo ut jam, ex impia

79. *De Incarnatione*, lib. 17, disp. 5, sect. 2, n. 13.

80. *De Incarnatione*, disp. 7, sect. 2, n. 14.

81. *Clypeus, De Praedestinatione*, disp. 2, art. 1, paragr. 9, n. 50.

82. *Treatise on the Love of God*, ch. 5; cf. also ch. 4.

eorum sententia, inutilis sit Filius, quem instar instrumenti factum esse voluit, quandoquidem ea sunt effecta, quorum causa creatus ipse est. . . . Ac nos quidem creare volens, et de nobis deliberans, res creatas vocat; illum vero, quem nostri causa creat, Filium atque Haereditem nominat. Atque nos potius, quorum gratia illum facit, filios oportuit appellari; vel certe illum, qui Filius est, prius debuit cogitare et velle, propter quem, *sc.*, etiam nos omnes facit.⁸³

The second quotation is from St. Gregory of Nazianzus:

Ergo nec quidquam horum Arium creatura est; nec, quod eo deterius, propter me creatus est. Alioquin non modo creatura esset, sed etiam nobis abjectius atque contemptior. Nam si ego ad Dei gloriam conditus sum, hoc autem propter me (forceps utique propter curram efficitur, aut serra propter januam), sequitur profecto, ut respectu causae sim superior. Quanto enim Deus rebus creatis est sublimior, tanto id, quod mea causa creatum est, me, qui propter Deum effectus sum, vilius atque ignobilius est. . . .⁸⁴

The third is from St. Cyril of Alexandria:

Si propterea creatum esse Filium dicunt, ut nos Deus per ipsum crearet, videant in quantum impietatem labantur. Videtur enim hoc pacto ipse propter nos non vero nos propter ipsum facti esse. Et nos quidem opus, ipse vero operis instrumentum. Hoc igitur nobis acceptum ferat, quod constitutus propter nos. Eritque ipse gloria nostra, quemadmodum mulier est viri. "Mulier enim, ut ait Scriptura, gloria viri est" (1 Cor. 11, 7), causamque addit dicens: "Non enim vir creatus est propter mulierem sed mulier propter virum" (*ibid.*, 11, 9). Si ergo propter nos creatus est Filius, non autem nos propter ipsum; erimus profecto nos illo praestantiores, quemadmodum Adam muliere propter ipsum facta. Sed hoc absurdum est. . . . Si Filius propter nos factus est, ut ille dicunt, non erit ille primus nostrum apud Deum: neque enim illum mente concipiens, nos postea propter ipsum creavit, sed de nostra creatione cogitans, illum propter nos creavit.⁸⁵

The fourth Church Father we cite is St. John Chrysostom:

Amabilior est Ecclesia Deo, quam coelum ipsum. . . . Propter Ecclesiam coelum, non propter coelum Ecclesia⁸⁶ (That holds *a fortiori* of the Head of the Church).

St. Maximus Confessor says at length:

Christi Mysterium Scripturae textus Christum appellavit, palamque ostendit magnus Apostolus, cum ita (Col. 1, 26) ait: "Mysterium a saeculis et a generationibus absconditum, nunc patefactum est," idem scilicet ac Christum Christi vocans Mysterium. Hoc autem liquido arcana, nullaque verborum vi explicabilis, nec ullo mentis sensu intelligibilis, deitatis ac humanitatis secundum hypostasim unio existit. . . . Istud nimirum magnum illud est et absconditum Mysterium. Iste beatus finis, ob quem cuncta condita sunt. Hic divinus scopus origini rerum praecognitus, quem definiendo esse dicimus: Praeconceptum finem, cujus gratia omnia, ipse vero nullius gratia. In hunc finem respiciens Deus rerum naturas produxit. Hic vere Providentiae finis, et eorum quae Providentia reguntur, secundum quem, ea quae a Deo condita sunt, in ipsum colliguntur. Istud Mysterium, omnia circumscribens tempora, superinfinitemque ac infinitas saeculis praexistens, manifestans magnum Dei consilium; cujus nuntius ipse per essentiam Dei Sermo factus est homo; ipsumque, si fas loqui, penitissimum paternae bonitatis fundum manifestans; inque illo finem ostendens, ob quem plane, quae facta sunt principium essendi acceperunt. Nam propter Christum, sive Christi Mysterium, omnia saecula, et quae in ipsis saeculis sunt, principium et finem essent in Christo nacta sunt.

83. *Contra Arianos*, orat. 2, n. 29 f. (Pat. graec., vol. 26, col. 210 f.).

84. *Oratio* 42 (Pat. graec., vol. 36, col. 478 f.).

85. *Thesaurus*, assert. 15 (Pat. graec., vol. 75, col. 253).

86. *Homilia ante exilium*, n. 2 (Pat. graec., vol. 52, col. 429).

Prior enim saeculis concepta unio, ipsa finis, nulloque fine terminabilis, mensurae et immensitatis, termini et infiniti, Creatoris et creaturae, quietis et motus, in Christo novissimis temporibus manifestato, facta existit; sui ipsa ratione Dei praesentiae adimpletionem praestans. . . .⁸⁷

What St. Andrew of Crete says of Mary, can be applied *a fortiori* to Christ:

Hic testamentorum a Deo conditorum terminus, haec coronis oraculorum divinatorum, hoc arcanum ignotissimumque praeterni Dei in hominum genus consilium, hae primitiae communionis necessitudinisque omnium Conditoris Dei ad proprium figmentum.⁸⁸

To the above testimonies we can add one that is very conclusive. P. Chrysostom, O. F. M., whom I have cited frequently, and who has written a great deal over a period of about four decades on the subject of Christ's absolute primacy, composed a little prayer to Christ the King, which has been enriched by a plenary indulgence since 1923 and has been published in the official book of indulgenced prayers since 1929. It begins thus: "O Christ Jesus, I salute Thee King of heaven and earth. All things created were made for Thee." In that second line we have our thesis expressed. It is a summary of all that Father Chrysostom had written on the absolute primacy of Christ. Notice that the prayer does not say: All things created are for Thy glory. One might then say that it refers to all things created as they are in the redeemed world, of which alone Christ is the final cause. But it says explicitly: All things created were made for Christ; i. e., from their creation they were intended for Christ.⁸⁹ This, to my mind, clinches the argument about Christ being the universal final cause.

Consequently we can draw the conclusion now, and say: Christ is the universal final cause; therefore He is first and absolutely in the mind of God, and that primarily for no other purpose than His own supreme glory.

ARGUMENT 2

a. Exemplar of Creatures

God intended Christ as the exemplar of man in creation. But an exemplar must exist prior to the things of which it is the exemplar. Therefore, Christ is prior to man in the mind of God, and He exists independently of man, and of man's sin; i. e., absolutely and primarily for His own glory.

Ad Minorem

The minor is certain and is admitted by all. An exemplar must by metaphysical necessity exist at least intentionally in the mind of the agent before the things of which it is an exemplar; for, things that do not exist are to be made according to the exemplar that already exists. Frassen, who argues explicitly for the absolute primacy of Christ from the fact of the exemplar, gives the reason for the minor a little differently:

87. *Ad Thalass.*, q. 60 (Pat. graec., vol. 90, col. 619. 622).

88. *Oratio* 14, *In Dormitione Deiparae*, 3 (Pat. graec., vol. 97, col. 1091).

89. Cf. *American Ecclesiastical Review*, vol. 104 (1941), pp. 57-63.

Exemplar secundum quod aliquid fit, prius intenditur ab operante, quam illud, quod ad ejus imitationem produci debet. . . . Omnis enim causa aliqua prioritate suam praecedat effectum; exemplar autem habet rationem causae.⁹⁰

To prove the primary and absolute predestination of Christ from the fact that He is the Exemplar of man in creation, is an argument that has not been used very much in the past. The Abbot Rupert used it when he wrote:

Fodiens hic in altum ut fundamentum ponam (tractationis scilicet), qualem invenio petram, nisi ipsam beatæ Trinitatis intentionem dicentis: Faciamus hominem. . . . Quænam erat intentio, vel quid erat in intentione ejus, nisi is qui nunc sedet ad dexteram Patris, Mediator Dei et hominum, Homo Christus Jesus? Si enim quod saepe dictum, semperque sciendum est, non solum per Ipsum, verum etiam ut ait Apostolus, propter Ipsum omnia (Hebr. 2, 10), quanto magis humana propter Ipsum facta est creatura! . . . Numquid enim cum hæc diceret Beata Trinitas: Faciamus . . . de Homine isto nihil cogitaverat aut proposuerat; sed postquam peccavit Adam, tunc demum istud cogitavit Deus, ut homo fieret Dei Filius, ob redimendum humanum genus? Diximus de hoc in præcedentibus. . . .⁹¹

After that this argument seems to have been forgotten. St. Bonaventure's exposition of this question does not touch the argument from the exemplar. Later on Catharinus, O. P.,⁹² and Salmeron, S. J.,⁹³ use this argument. St. Lawrence of Brindisi helps us out again. He states explicitly that Adam in creation was the form of Christ, and Eve of Mary:

Sine peccato Adam formata fuit, totus purus, innocens, sanctus; erat enim, ut Paulus ait, "forma futuri," idest, Christum præfigurabat; similiter Eva divinitus fuit efformata tota pura et sancta mente et corpore, virgo illabata; sicut autem Adam Christi fuit divina quaedam imago, ita plane Eva Virginis Deiparae.⁹⁴

And when he is proving the primacy of Christ he uses this argument from the exemplar:

Ut Christi servi essent, creavit Angelos in coelo; ut Christi imago esset, formavit hominem in terra. Sic enim Paulus vocavit Adam imaginem Futuri (Rom. 5, 14).⁹⁵

Ad Majorem

Today the argument is being used and developed quite extensively. Authors are developing especially the major of the argument by searching through the Fathers. And that is really where the burden of the proof lies. We must prove from the sources of revelation that Christ is really the Exemplar of man in creation; and for that there is abundant material in the Fathers. Both Fr. J-B. Petit-Bornand, O. F. M. Cap., and Père Chrysostom, O. F. M., have gathered excellent material.⁹⁶ I shall quote a few texts of the Fathers as samples.

90. *De Incarnatione*, lib. 7, disp. 1, art. 3, q. 1, concl. 2, p. 247b.

91. *De glorificatione Trinitatis*, lib. 4, c. 2 (Pat. lat., vol. 169, col. 75 f.); lib. 3, c. 20 f. (72 f.).

92. *De eximia prædestinatione Christi*, towards the end; cf. Risi, *Sul motivo primario dell'Incarnazione del Verbo* (Desclee, Roma, 1898), vol. 1, p. 141.

93. *In I Tim.*, disp. 3, towards the end.

94. *Mariale*, vol. 1, p. 415.

95. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

96. J-B. Petit-Bornand, *op. cit.*, pp. 259-270. Père Chrysostome, O. F. M., *Christus, Alpha et Omega seu de Christi universali regno* (Desclee, Rome, 1910), pars 2, ch. 2.

St. Irenaeus:

Nam imaginem Dei fecit hominem et imago Dei Filius est, ad cujus imaginem homo factus est. Et propter hoc in extremis temporibus apparuit, ut imaginem similem sibi ostenderet.⁹⁷

And again:

Si enim ille [Adam] de terra, et manu et artificio Dei plasmationem et substantiam habuit, hic [Christus] autem non manu et artificio Dei; jam non servavit similitudinem hominis, qui factus est secundum imaginem ipsius et similitudinem, et inconstans artificium videbatur, non habens circa quod ostendat sapientiam suam.⁹⁸

St. Gregory of Nyssa:

Quidpiam igitur profundius nobis, quam prima fronte pateat, illud, "ad imaginem," quod est in homine, obscure indicat. Non enim unam quandam imaginem ac similitudinem Dei possidet in se homo, sed et secundam et tertiam, tanquam in speculo quodam et adumbrata effigie fictitia et typæ, non propria, Divinitatis, in qua sunt tres Personæ, mysterium exprimens; neque vero id solum, sed et unius ex sancta Trinitate, Dei Verbi Incarnationem prænuntiat. Ac fortasse ad imaginem quidem est Divinitatis nuda anima, ad similitudinem autem Incarnationis Verbi istud animæ nostræ corporisque compositum.⁹⁹

St. Athanasius:

Quapropter cum bonus sit, ne id fieret, propriae imaginis Domini nostri Jesu Christi, illos participes reddidit, et ad suam imaginem, Patris videlicet Verbum animo concipientes, Patris cognitionem per ipsum assequi possent, et Creatorem cognoscendo, felicem ac vere beatam vitam viverent.¹⁰⁰

Tertullian:

Sic præfatio Patris ad Filium: Faciamus. . . . Id utique quo finxit, ad imaginem Dei fecit illum, scilicet Christi. Ita limus ille, jam tunc imaginem induens Christi futuri in carne, non tantum Dei opus erat, sed et pignus.¹⁰¹

Also:

Erat autem ad cujus imaginem faciebat: ad Filii scilicet, qui homo futurus certior et verior, imaginem suam fecerat dici hominem qui tunc de limo formari habebat, imago veri et similitudo.¹⁰²

St. Martinus Legionensis:

Post hæc fecit Deus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem suam, id est, carnem hominis ad imaginem corporis Jesu Christi Domini nostri, et animam ad similitudinem suæ divinitatis.¹⁰³

Therefore if Christ is the Exemplar of Adam at creation, He existed prior to Adam in the mind of God. He is decreed primarily and absolutely for His own sake. At least, He is absolutely independent from sin; for He was

97. *Demonstratio prædicationis apostolicæ*; Latin translation by S. Weber (Freiburg, 1917), p. 47.

98. *Adversus Haereses*, lib. 3, cap. 22, n. 1 (Pat. graec., vol. 7, col. 956).

99. "De eo quid sit: Ad imaginem Dei. . ." (Pat. graec., vol. 44, col. 1330).

100. *Incarnatio Verbi*, 11 (Pat. graec., vol. 25, col. 115).

101. *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 6 (Pat. lat., vol. 2, col. 802C).

102. *Adversus Præxeam*, c. 12 (Pat. lat., vol. 2, col. 168A).

103. *Sermo 4 in Septuag.* (Pat. lat., vol. 208, col. 556A).

already intended by God at the creation of Adam and could never, therefore, exist merely because of sin.

b. Exemplar of Predestinations

Christ is the Exemplar of man's predestination to grace and to glory from the very beginning; and for that reason He had to be intended prior to man, and consequently He was intended prior to and independently of sin, and He exists primarily for His own glory. (Texts that deal with our predestination in Christ generally include also the notions of final and mediatorial causality. Here we are taking them only as far as they express exemplary causality.)

From the Beginning

That Christ is *de facto* in some way the Exemplar of our predestinations, is certain doctrine. It was taught by St. Bonaventure¹⁰⁴ and by St. Thomas.¹⁰⁵

The question, however, is whether Christ was decreed to be the Exemplar of our predestinations from the very beginning so that Adam and Eve were predestined in Christ, so that Christ was in the very first picture of God's predestination and not merely after the fall of Adam. Frassen formulates the argument something like this: Whoever is the exemplar of all the elect is predestined before the prevision of sin, and that holds most of all in the system of the Thomists, according to whom predestination is *ante praevisa merita vel demerita*. But Christ is such an Exemplar according to Rom. 8:29.¹⁰⁶ St. Lawrence of Brindisi, too, argues directly and formally from the idea that Christ is the Exemplar of the predestination of the saints to the notion of Christ's primacy:

Nec solum prima est creatura praedestinata, sed etiam causa exemplaris et finalis praedestinationis Sanctorum. Sic Paulus ait: Rom. 8, 29. . . Ubi declarat Paulus Christum ab aeterno fuisse causam exemplarem praedestinationis, ubi ait: "Conformes fieri imaginis Filii sui! . . ." ¹⁰⁷

The eminent Suarez worked this argument out nicely:

Sensus ergo Pauli est omnes praedestinos electos esse ut sint Christo homini conformes in gloria, ut ipse sit tanquam prima mensura caeterorum. . . Nec vero dici potest praedestinos fuisse electos ut sint Christo conformes in gloria, solum quia in re ipsa huiusmodi conformitatem habituri sint, et non quia talis conformitas fuerit per se intenta in prima eorum electione; hoc enim modo etiam possent dici praedestinati conformes in gloria Angelo, vel Beatae Virgini; at vero Paulus aliquam specialem dignitatem Christi voluit illis verbis explicare, nimirum, quod sicut est primum principium in genere gratiae, ita est etiam primum exemplar et metrum caeterorum, non quia indigeret Deus exemplari veluti extrinseco quo in actione sua dirigeretur sed qui ex parte objectorum voluit unum esse primum, ad cuius similitudinem alia formarentur.¹⁰⁸

A modern Scripture scholar, Ugo Lattanzi, professor of Biblical Theology in the Lateran seminary of Rome, wrote a number of pages just to prove that

104. *In III Sent.*, d. 11, art. 1, q. 2.

105. *Sum. theol.*, pars 3, q. 24, art. 3-4.

106. *De Incarnatione*, lib. 7, p. 258.

107. *Mariale*, vol. 1, p. 80.

108. *De Incarnatione*, lib. 17, disp. 5, sect. 2, n. 18.

according to St. Paul Christ is the Exemplar of all predestinations.¹⁰⁹ He argues from Colossians 1:15 and from Romans 8:29.

With the aid of Tradition I think this argument can be made effective. Till now it has not been used so much because it was considered subordinate to the general idea of predestination in Christ as Mediator, which we shall consider next.

ARGUMENT 3

In general we can formulate the argument thus: God decreed Christ as the universal Mediator of angels and of men from the very beginning. But if that is the case, then Christ's existence is independent of sin at least, and He exists primarily for His own glory. The major of the argument must be proved. We shall break it up into smaller arguments to bring out its value more forcefully.

a. Mediator of Grace and Glory

From the Beginning

Christ is the First-born and the Head of all the elect. That is the unmistakable doctrine of St. Paul (cf. Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15 ff; Eph. 1:3-6; and also Prov. 8:22). But that predestination in which Christ is First-born and the Head, is the original predestination of all men: according to St. Paul there is only one predestination; not two—one at the creation without Christ, and one after the fall with Christ. There was only one plan of divine adoption and that was before the foundation of the world and in Christ Jesus. God wanted to elevate men to grace and glory; but He never willed to do that except through Christ. So Christ was in the very first picture of predestination and there is no longer rhyme or reason in speaking of His coming merely to redeem.

Absolutely

In order to prevent any escape from the argument just given by saying that Christ was predestined first, still He came only to redeem, let us note that God could not have willed men to grace and glory only after foreseeing the Fall. Grace and glory are positive; sin is merely the lack of grace. Before God could permit sin, He had to will grace and glory for men. But according to St. Paul Christ is in the first picture of predestination to grace and glory, and that as the First and as Head. Consequently He is decreed before the sin of Adam.¹¹⁰ Note that that argument abstracts from the disputed question of predestination *ante vel post praevisa merita aut demerita*.

Scotus formulated this argument somewhat differently. He argued that no one was ever predestined by God to grace and glory merely because some

109. *Il Primato universale di Cristo secondo le S. Scritture* (Lateranum, Romae, 1937), pp. 75-93.

110. Cf. Frassen, *op. cit.*, p. 249b.

one else committed a sin. Man was not predestined to take the place of the fallen angels, nor was one man predestined because another fell. The reason for this is that such a good would be *bonum occasionatum*; i. e., a good occasioned merely by some failure. *A fortiori* the predestination of Christ does not depend on the sin of any one, because Christ is predestined to the highest glory, and God, the most intelligent Agent, wills that first which is greatest, nearest the end.¹¹¹

b. State of Innocence

The fact that Christ was Mediator of Adam and Eve in the state of innocence is a proof of Christ's universal Mediatorship. The incarnation was revealed to Adam and Eve in the state of innocence. This we shall prove below from the fact that Adam prophesied that the union between Eve and himself was a type of the union between Christ and His Church. We have to show that the matrimonial union of Adam and Eve prefigured the union between Christ and His Church, and that Adam realized this and foreknew the incarnation already in the state of innocence.

But if the incarnation, if Christ, was revealed to Adam in the state of innocence, it was with the purpose that Adam had to believe in Christ as his Mediator of grace and glory. Adam had to believe in Christ then already as his necessary Mediator. But if Christ was Mediator already in the state of innocence, then we can no longer speak of His coming merely to redeem. He was predestined absolutely as Mediator from the beginning. And since the greater is not willed primarily for the less, Christ was willed primarily for His own glory. All authors will readily admit that Christ was willed primarily for Himself if we can prove that His existence does not depend on sin.

Note that we can separate this argument from the argument of mediatorship, and show that by the very fact that God revealed Christ to Adam in the state of innocence, God intended Christ to exist absolutely and independently of sin, or else this revelation was a pure fiction on God's part, a thing that is below the dignity of God and incompatible with His holiness. We shall consider St. Thomas' objection later.

So it is really the major of the argument that must be proved from Tradition. We must prove that Adam really had foreknowledge of the incarnation in the state of innocence.

Adam Foreknew the Incarnation

After God created Eve from the side of Adam, Adam said:

This now is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife: and they shall be two in one flesh (Gen. 2, 23-24).

Centuries later the great Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians exhorting the husbands to love their wives. He appeals to the love of Christ for His

111. Cf. *Op. Ox.*, lib. 3, d. 7, q. 3, dub. 1 (vol. 14, p. 354; Balic, p. 5).

Church and then quotes verse 24 of Genesis. And he adds: "This is a great mystery—I mean in reference to Christ and to the Church" (5:32). Ever since St. Paul wrote that, the writers of the Church have taken the words of Genesis to be a prophecy of the union of Christ and His Church, and they have held that Adam foreknew the incarnation which God revealed to him at that time. Let us listen to two Doctors of the Church, two eminent Scripture scholars. First, St. Jerome:

Propter hoc relinquet homo... in carne una—Primus homo et primus vates Adam, hoc de Christo et Ecclesia prophetavit: quod reliquerit Dominus noster atque Salvator Patrem suum Deum, et matrem suam caelestem Jerusalem, et venerit ad terras propter corpus suum Ecclesiam, et de suo eam latere fabricatus sit, et propter illam Verbum caro factum sit.¹¹²

Next, St. Augustine:

Illa ecstasis quam Dominus immisit in Adam, ut soporatus obdormiret, recte intelligitur ad hoc immisa, ut et ipsius mens per ecstasim particeps fieret tanquam angelicae curiae, et intrans sanctuarium Dei intelligeret in novissima. Denique evigilans tanquam prophetiae plenus, cum ad se adductam costam mulierem suam videret, eructavit continuo quod magnum Sacramentum commendat Apostolus: "Ecce nunc..." Quae verba cum primi hominis fuisse Scriptura testatur, Dominus tamen in Evangelio Deum dixisse declaravit. Ait enim: Non legistis quia fecit hominem ad initio, masculum et feminam fecit eos? et dixit: Propter hoc...? (Mt. 19, 4-5) — ut hinc intelligeremus propter ecstasim quae praecesserat in Adam, hoc eum divinitus tanquam prophetam dicere potuisse.¹¹³

It would seem most natural to argue that if Adam had knowledge of the incarnation before his fall, as a very great good and as the means of his grace and glory, then Christ was not dependent on the fall. At any rate as soon as the question of the motive of the incarnation was discussed formally, this argument from the foreknowledge of Adam was used. The first who seems to have used it is Honorius Augustodunensis. He writes:

Denique provida Scriptura ante peccatum hominis promittit Christum, dicens: "Relinquet..." — Haec Apostolus exponit ita: "Sacramentum..." — Ecce adhuc nullum peccatum ab homine committitur, et Christus et Ecclesiae conjunctio in una carne praedicatur. Unde idem Apostolus: Deus, inquit, ante mundi constitutionem praedestinos ad vitam eligit, quia in Christo nos deificari constituit."¹¹⁴

St. Bonaventure knew of this argument against his opinion, so he tries to refute it by saying that matrimony signifies not only the union of Christ and the Church with regard to the union of natures, but also the union of God and the Church through charity. The latter he says would have obtained in the state of innocence.¹¹⁵ But he forgets that St. Paul interprets it explicitly of Christ as such, not of God. Again, St. Bonaventure says God could have revealed the incarnation to Adam without revealing the cause, which was sin, just as Joseph foreknew of his greatness as ruler, but did not know that he was to be sold first.¹¹⁶ But that is merely begging the question. Joseph would have been great even though he had not been sold.

112. *In Eph.*, lib. 3 (Pat. lat., vol. 26, col. 535C).

113. *De Genesi ad litteram*, lib. 9, c. 19, n. 36 (Pat. lat., vol. 34, col. 40n).

114. *Libell. VIII Quaest.*, c. 2 (Pat. lat., vol. 172, col. 1182D).

115. *In III Sent.*, d. 1, art. 2, q. 2 (vol. 3, pp. 23A and 27B).

116. *In II Sent.*, d. 23, dub. 4 (vol. 2, 349A).

St. Thomas, in discussing the necessity of faith in Christ for all times, says that even Adam before his sin had to believe in Christ as the consummator of his glory. And as an argument for this he takes Genesis 2:24 together with Ephesians 5:32. Of course, he realizes that it would cause him some difficulty with regard to his opinion about Christ's coming only after the Fall, but he does not deny that Adam knew of the incarnation before the Fall. He simply says that God revealed the incarnation to Adam, but did not tell him why he was coming, sc., because of sin.¹¹⁷ We shall consider this answer afterwards.

St. Lawrence of Brindisi uses this argument. He appeals to St. Jerome, St. Augustine, St. Epiphanius, Tertullian, and St. Thomas, to show that Adam prophesied about Christ and the Church. Then he concludes:

Hinc multi ex sacris theologis colligunt quod, etiamsi non peccasset Adam, Christus tamen incarnatus fuisset; quoniam ante peccatum revelatum fuit ei mysterium Incarnationis, et de eo prophetavit.¹¹⁸

Frasen, too, argues from St. Thomas and from St. Augustine to show that Adam had knowledge of the incarnation as is indicated in Genesis 2:24 and Ephesians 5:32. Suarez works this argument out quite thoroughly both when he treats of the motive of the incarnation¹¹⁹ and when he discusses the faith of Adam.¹²⁰ In this latter place he says: "Quin sit absolute unanimis, nihilominus communis et vera sententia est Adam ante peccatum revelationem de Christo . . . habuisse." He holds too that Adam had already to believe in Christ as his Mediator of grace and glory.

An Objection

We saw above that the natural conclusion from this revelation of Christ to Adam is that Christ was predestined for His own glory primarily, that He was destined to be Mediator of man already in Paradise. We saw too that some theologians, like St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure, hold that Christ was revealed to Adam in Paradise, but deny that Christ was predestined absolutely. They assert that God revealed to Adam the incarnation as such, but did not reveal to him that Christ would be a redeemer, and that the sin of Adam would be the occasion of that redemption.¹²¹ According to Estius¹²² and Sylvius,¹²³ the reason why God did not reveal to Adam that his sin would be the cause of Christ's coming, is that he would have then been unhappy in Paradise.

But doesn't that seem to be sort of a ridiculous plan for an all-wise God to make? God would say to Adam: "Look, Adam, here is my well-beloved Son who will one day take on flesh and bone of yours. He is to be your Mediator of all grace and glory." But in back of His mind God would say to Himself: "But I am not sending Him, except you offend Me gravely."

117. *Sum. theol.*, pars 2-2, q. 2, art. 7.

118. *Mariale*, vol. 1, p. 78.

119. *De Incarnatione*, lib. 17, disp. 4, sect. 12, nn. 12-13.

120. *Opera Omnia*, Lib. 3, disp. 3, c. 18, n. 8.

121. *Sum. theol.*, pars 2-2, q. 2, art. 7.

122. *In II Sent.*, d. 23, para. 5.

123. *In S. Thomam*, pars 1, q. 94, art. 3.

God would command Adam under pain of mortal sin to believe in Christ as His Mediator of grace, still Christ would not come to be Mediator unless Adam offended God, unless Adam would reject Christ as Mediator, unless he would lose the grace of Christ. Such a plan seems to be incompatible with the wisdom and holiness of God.

And who would say that Adam did not believe that by being faithful to Christ's grace he would further the coming of Christ from his race, and that by being unfaithful, by losing the grace of Christ, he would rather frustrate His coming? Suarez argues in that manner against St. Thomas:

Falsum est enim in omni revelatione facta de hoc mysterio, assignatum esse rationem ejus ex peccato primi hominis. . . . Quod ita explico: nam si ipsi Adae proposita esset haec quaestio quam D. Thomas modo versat, sc., an, eo non peccante, revelatio illi facta habitura esset effectum, sine dubio contrarium, quam D. Thomas, ex simili ratione concluderet, hoc modo: Mihi revelata est voluntas divina de perficiendo hoc mysterio, propter rationem altissimam, quae a peccato non pendet; ergo, licet peccatum nunquam futurum sit, complebitur ista revelatio; quin potius certius crederet Deum fuisse incarnandum non existente peccato, quam eo interveniente, quia non existente, timere posset ne suo peccato tantum Dei beneficium impediret.¹²⁴

An Impossible Plan

If God revealed the incarnation to Adam, and if Adam had to believe in Christ as St. Thomas says, then the first grace of Adam was the mediatorial grace of Christ; it was received through the mediation of Christ. But it could not have been given in view of the redemption because Adam had not fallen yet. Therefore it had to be given through Christ as non-redeemer. Hence that grace was actually given through Christ, and Christ would have had to come even though there were no sin, or else that grace would not have been given through Christ independently of sin and of the redemption. Nor was it possible for God to say after the fall: "The grace I gave to Adam before the fall independently of Christ is now given in view of Christ the Redeemer." That was past and could not be influenced by what followed. Let us listen to St. Lawrence:

Nec satis capio quomodo, in divina praescientia, praevio peccati Adae praecesserit Christi praedestinationem; nam praescientia peccati praesupponit praescientiam gratiae, sicut mors praesupponit vitam, infirmitas sanitatem, privatio omnis habitum: et Adam prius fuit sanctus, quam peccator. Peccatum originale privatio est gratiae et iustitiae originalis; gratia autem praesupponit originem, sicut fluvius fontem; Christus autem praedestinatus fuit fons totius gratiae et gloriae. Sic enim: Verbum caro factum est . . . plenum gratiae et veritatis. Et de plenitudine ejus omnes nos accepimus (Joan. 1, 14, 16). Sic Christus dicitur sol iustitiae. Adam luna plena fuit, sed eclipsim ac luminis deliquium passa. Sed prius unde lumen accepit? Nonne a sole? Sic gratia Christi tanquam solis lux praecesserit Adae peccatum; nam a Christo accepit gratiam et originalem iustitiam, quae fuit ante omne peccatum. Peccati ergo praescientiam praecesserit, naturae ordine praescientia gratiae; gratiae autem praescientiam, Christi praescientia ac praedestinatio. Deus ergo ab aeterno ad communicandos infinitos thesauros bonitatis suae, ad ostendendam infinitam caritatem suam sacramentum hoc divinae incarnationis ordinavit, ut Christus esset magnus, et sederet rex ad dexteram Dei (Luc. 1, 32).¹²⁵

124. *De Incarnatione*, lib. 17, disp. 4, sect. 12, n. 13.

125. *Mariale*, vol. 1, pp. 81-82.

So is not the position of the Scotists much more logical? God revealed Christ to Adam and Eve in the state of innocence as their Mediator of grace and glory, to be accepted through faith. God did not reveal to Adam the sin which would occasion Christ's coming as Redeemer simply because there was no need. Christ was to come absolutely, independently of sin, so why should God reveal to Adam that Christ would come as Redeemer *if* and when Adam would offend Him?

c. Essential Glory of the Angels

Mediator of Angels

Christ is universal Mediator, decreed so, independent of sin because He was the Mediator of the angels in grace and glory from the very beginning. The incarnation was revealed to them in the time of their probation, and they were to acknowledge Christ as their King and Mediator. The good angels believed and adored and were admitted to everlasting glory through Christ. The bad angels under the leadership of Lucifer refused this act of faith and adoration and were therefore cast into everlasting hell fire. Consequently the good angels belong to the one Church of Christ; Christ is their Head with regard to all grace and glory; they belong to the Mystical Body of Christ. Now, if Christ is such a Mediator for the angels, all will readily admit that He was predestined absolutely, independently of sin. That follows from each of the above points taken singly, or from all taken together. We could take the individual points and run them through the test of Tradition; however, since the individual authors often give us more than one point, and since these points are so linked together, it is better if we add up all the points that each author gives, and thus get the sum of their doctrine with regard to Christ's mediation for the angels. The points that they do not give we can deduce easily; e. g., if an author says that the angels sinned against Christ, we can infer with certainty that, according to that author, the angels had a revelation of Christ in the time of their probation and were commanded to adore Him and believe in Him as the Mediator of their grace and glory.

Franciscan School

The Franciscan theologians and preachers give us abundant material for the mediation of Christ with regard to the angels, and they use it as a proof of Christ's primacy. We shall give the testimony of some of the outstanding Franciscans. The very first theologian of the Order, Alexander of Hales, used this argument to prove that Christ was predestined absolutely:

An si natura humana per peccatum lapsa non esset, adhuc fuisset *ratio* et *convenientia* ad Incarnationem? . . . Responsio — Sine praeiudicio concedendum est, quod etsi non fuisset natura humana lapsa, adhuc esset convenientia ad Incarnationem; secundum quod dixit beatus Bernardus super Jonae 1, 12 — Propter me orta est tempestas — exponens illud verbum de Filio Dei, dicens quod Lucifer procecidit rationalem creaturam assumendam in unitate Personae Filii Dei: vidit et invidit. Unde invidia fuit causa casus diaboli, et movens ipsum ad tentandum

hominem, cuius felicitati invidabat, ut per peccatum demereretur humana natura assumptionem et unibilitatem ad Deum. Ex quo patet quod Lucifer intellexit unionem humanae naturae; et ipsum lapsum intellexit *ut impediret* unionis: propterea procuravit lapsum. Ex hoc relinquitur, quod circumscripto lapsu, adhuc est ponere convenientiam Incarnationis.¹²⁶

Alexander is here discussing the question of the convenience of the incarnation in the state of innocence. He says it would have been convenient even then. As an argument he adduces the fact that Lucifer sinned by envying man who was to be hypostatically united with the Word Eternal, of which mystery he had a revelation. Moreover, later on Satan tempted man in order to impede the incarnation. Consequently, Alexander implies that the incarnation had been decreed absolutely and independently of sin. So even if Adam had not sinned Christ would have become incarnate; and consequently the incarnation was convenient even in the state of innocence; for, *ab esse ad posse valet illatio*. That seems to be the line of argument that Alexander uses: He proves the convenience of the incarnation from the fact of Christ's absolute predestination, which he proves from the sin of Lucifer and from the temptation of Adam by Lucifer. Therefore, I think Scheeben¹²⁷ and the editors of the works of St. Bonaventure¹²⁸ are not precise in saying that Alexander did not answer the question of the principal reason of the incarnation, but merely discussed its convenience.¹²⁹ However, we must admit that Alexander was not consistent, or at least he did not see all the consequences of the absolute predestination of Christ; for, in another place he teaches that the angels received only accidental grace from Christ.¹³⁰ And in still another place he makes this remark: "Certe erit maxima dignitas quod ille qui est principium Adae, erit filius Adae, quod forte non fieret, si non peccasset."¹³¹

Cardinal Ximenes

The eminent Cardinal Ximenes (1409 d.) taught the following quite clearly: The incarnation was revealed to the angels in the time of their probation; they were to make an act of adoration and of faith in Christ; the good angels thereby merited beatitude; the bad angels took occasion from this to sin and were therefore punished.¹³²

126. *Sum. theol.*, vol. 4, n. 23, p. 42A (edit. Cologne, q. 2, membr. 13, p. 21b). The texts cited for Alexander of Hales are to be published in volume four of the Quaracchi edition of his works. I have taken them from Bissen's article in the *Antonianum*, vol. 7 (1932), pp. 317 ff. The references to the Cologne edition are given in parentheses.

127. *Handbuch der katholischen Dogmatik* (Herder, Freiburg B., 1882), vol. 3, p. 374.

128. *Opera Omnia*, vol. 3, p. 28, Scholion.

129. Cf. Bissen, in *Antonianum*, vol. 7 (1932), p. 318 f.

130. *Sum. theol.*, vol. 4, n. 114, p. 158 ff. (Cologne, q. 12, membr. 12, art. 3, paragr. 4, p. 78b).

131. *Ibid.*, n. 19, ad 3, p. 39b (Cologne, q. 2, n. 9, p. 20a).

132. Cf. *Premier llibre del Crestia*, 9, 1; *Llibre dels Angels*, tract. 3, c. 23; *Vida de Jesucrist*, lib. 1, tract. 2, c. 1-3; tract. 4, c. 1-8. These works are said to be in manuscript form in the library of the university of Barcelona. J.B. Petit-Bornand, *op. cit.*, pp. 356-359, gives a Latin translation of the passages in point.

St. Bernardine of Siena

The preacher of the Incarnate Word, St. Bernardine of Siena, teaches the same doctrine as Cardinal Ximenes, and that quite emphatically. Here are two typical passages:

Nam ideo Deus cuncta creavit, ut in omnem creaturam rationalem Christus diffunderet et dispensaret ineffabiles gratias suas, sicut et ipse pro omnibus suscepit gratias a sibi unita Persona Dei. Unde Joannes testatur dicens: De plenitudine ejus nos omnes accepimus gratiam pro gratia. Sicut Christus secundum divinitatem dominium habet et potestatem universalis praemii; sic secundum humanitatem potestatem habet universalis meriti. Nec enim angelica, nec humana natura aliquid pondus aequalitatis justitiae habere possunt ad illud praemium infinitum, quod est Deus, nisi fulciatur merito Jesu Christi. Quod si quis objiciat, quomodo meritum Christi tunc angelis valebat, cum non meruerat Christus? Dicat et ipse mihi, quomodo illis hominibus jam valere poterat, qui ante adventum suum crediderunt in eum: quod Ecclesia cuncta vere et feliciter valuisse testatur. Et ex his intelliget quomodo electis angelis ejus meritum jam valebat. . . .¹³³

And again:

Huic autem Incarnationi quidam angelorum favebant, qui, sc., in Christi fide merito dilectionis ejus ad aeternam beatitudinem intraverunt, et hi astra matutina, quasi mane per claritatem gloriae orientia juste denominantur. Caeteri vero superbientes angeli, Luciferi circumventionem attracti, naturae inferiori subijci contemnebant, et ob hoc Incarnationi Christi nequiter invadebant.¹³⁴

St. Lawrence of Brindisi

St. Lawrence of Brindisi inculcates the same doctrine about Christ's mediation for the angels, and he uses that *ex professo* as an argument for the absolute predestination of Christ for His own glory. In commenting on the Annunciation he has this to say:

Etiam si non peccasset homo, Christus tamen salvator fuisset; non quidem liberando a malis, sed praeservando ac conservando in bonis. Sic enim Christus Salvator est Angelorum in coelo. Huic, nato Domino, Angelus ait: "Quia natus est vobis hodie Salvator, qui est Christus Dominus." Non inquit: "Salvator vester," sed absolute Salvator, sicut non dicit: "Qui est Christus, Dominus vester," sed simpliciter "Dominus," quia Christus universi Dominus est, etiam Angelorum; sic unicus creatorum omnium Salvator. Sicut Joseph dictus est mundi salvator, quia a morte famis mundum praeservavit.¹³⁵

In another sermon he expresses the universal mediation of Christ with a very beautiful figure:

Christus autem sol est justitiae, omnes autem Sancti et Angeli stellae sunt; omnes stellae a sole lumen accipiunt, omnes Sancti et Angeli a Christo lumen et splendorem justitiae, bonitatis et sanctitatis.¹³⁶

This doctrine is today, as the Most Reverend Leonard Bello writes, the common doctrine of the Franciscan school.¹³⁷ The Franciscan theologians have appealed to Sacred Scripture and to the Fathers for support of this

133. "De universo regno Jesu Christi," Sermo 54, art. 1. c. 3 (vol. 1, p. 316B).

134. *Ibid.*, art. 2, c. 3 (vol. 1, p. 319); and *passim*.

135. *Mariale*, vol. 1, p. 86.

136. *Ibid.*, p. 483.

137. *Acta Fratrum Minorum*, vol. 52 (1933), p. 306b, f.n. 72; cf. p. 301a.

doctrine, and rightly so, because it is a doctrine that can be known only through revelation. To prove that it is the correct doctrine, that it is revealed in Sacred Scripture and in Tradition, is a task for a long but useful investigation. All the points possible should be gathered from the Fathers and from Sacred Scripture to prove the soundness of the Franciscan view that all angels and men belong to the one Christ as Head, that they receive all the splendor of grace and glory from Him, the eternal and only Sun.

Name of Jesus

That Christ is universal Mediator from the beginning can be proved from the Holy Name that was given to Him by heaven. We are aware of the fact that men like Father Billot and Father Leeming, one-time professors in the Gregorian University of Rome, think they have found an invincible argument in the Name of Jesus against the Franciscan view. According to them this Name means Savior which is synonymous with Redeemer, Liberator. However, we can take that very Name of Jesus and make a most solid argument for the Franciscan view, for the universal mediation of Christ. The Name of Jesus implies that He was intended originally to be a preserver of grace, and not primarily a liberator, a redeemer. The Greek translation (*Soter*) has as primary meaning preserver, and not liberator. And that seems to be the primary meaning of *Jeshuah* which is seen in the fact that Joseph of Egypt is called "savior of the world" (Gen. 41, 45) for *preserving* the people from famine. St. Lawrence, the scholar of Sacred Scripture, noticed this as we saw above. Here, again, there is a vast field for investigation in Sacred Scripture and in Tradition.

ARGUMENT 4

The Proof of Scotus

Scotus is known as the great exponent of the Franciscan doctrine of the predestination of Christ. He proved the absolute primacy of Christ with the following argument:

Istud probō: quia omnis ordinate volens primo vult finem, deinde immediatius illa quae fini sunt immediatiora; sed Deus est ordinatissime volens: ergo sic vult. Primo vult se; et post se immediate, quantum ad extrinsecam, est anima Christi; ergo primo post velle intrinsecam, voluit gloriam Christo; ergo ante quodcumque meritum et ante quodcumque demeritum praevidit Christum sibi esse unicum in unitate suppositi.¹³⁸

We might set that argument up as follows:

Christ is the nearest to the end, sc., God's glory, because of His supreme glory which was consequent upon the personal union. But one who wills in an orderly fashion wills first of all the end, and then the means according to their nearness to the end. But God wills things in the most orderly fashion. Therefore God willed first His own glory and then Christ for His (Christ's) own sake as the means nearest the end.

138. *Rep. Par.*, lib. 3, d. 7, q. 4 (vol. 23, p. 303; Balic, p. 14). Cf. *Op. Os.*, lib. 3, d. 7, q. 3, dub. 1 (vol. 14, p. 354 f.; Balic, p. 14).

A Bone of Contention

This argument has always been a bone of contention. Some authors who defend the absolute primacy of Christ say that it is an invincible, a most convincing argument. Others grant that it concludes with very great becomingness, but only that. Those who oppose the primacy will not concede more than some kind of becomingness. Now what really is the value of this argument? The problem to be solved is this: Whether one who wills in an orderly fashion must will the means according to their nearness to the end; i. e., whether that nearest the end must be willed first. Let us analyse "nearest the end" and see whether we can solve the problem. Capreolus,¹³⁹ and later Suarez,¹⁴⁰ distinguished "nearest the end," but their distinction does not satisfy me.

More Perfect

First a means may be nearest the end by being more perfect than the other means; i. e., it contains more of the perfection of the end, it is more like the end than the other means; it is more apt to attain the end than the other means. In this case we are not considering the means in their relation to each other; in fact, we are excluding the fact that one means is subordinated to another: all the means are tending to the same end, some with more efficiency than others. The important thing is that they are tending towards the same end. Note, too, that it is not a question of choosing one means and discarding the others. It is a question of choosing a number of means of unequal perfection. Must I choose the more perfect first? It would seem so, because one who wills in an orderly fashion does not choose the means best suited to attain his end last, but first. If you wish to make a crown for a king and are given numerous jewels to put into it, you will not put the most beautiful one into the most inconspicuous place, but into the most prominent place. Or, if you are organizing an orchestra with ten violinists, you will not put the best player in the last place, but you will make him solo first violinist. That seems to be the only way for an intelligent being to act. The least we can say is that it is most becoming for an intelligent being to act in that way. So Scotus' argument has at least that much value.

More Perfect and Intermediate End

One means may be more perfect than the other means and also the intermediate end of the other means. The other means cannot attain their ultimate end except through the medium of the more perfect means; e. g., grace is an intermediate end for the call. In this sense the principle "that nearest the end must be chosen first," is merely the principle "the *finis* must be chosen first." Above we proved from revelation that Christ is the most perfect means to God's glory and that He is the intermediate end towards which all other creatures must tend. Can we prove from reason that Christ the most

139. *In III Sent.*, d. 1, q. 1, art. 3, ad. 1.

140. *De Incarnatione*, lib. 17, disp. 5, sect. 1, n. 12.

perfect means is also the intermediate end of the other means? Does the more perfect means have to be the intermediate end of the other means? I shall answer by saying that if there is an interdependence between the more perfect means and the other means, if one is intended for the other in some way, then it is necessary that the greater means be the end of the less and that the greater does not exist primarily for the less. The good of the less cannot be the primary reason for the existence of the greater, so that if it were not for this good of the less the greater would not exist. The primary reason for a child to exist may not be for the good of a doll; the primary reason of the soul to exist may not be for the good of the body. St. Thomas taught this principle very clearly:

Sic igitur et in partibus universi unaquaque creatura est propter suum proprium actum et perfectionem; secundo autem creaturae ignobiliores sunt propter nobiliores.¹⁴¹

He has many illustrations of this principle.¹⁴² On the other hand, he teaches just as clearly that the greater good may not be for the less. "It is unbecoming," he writes, "that the greater be ordained towards the less as to its principal end. For the end is more powerful (*potior*) than the means."¹⁴³ He applies that principle when he writes that the angels can exist for man in the sense that they are useful to man. But angels would exist even if there were no men for them to help. They participate absolutely in the divine goodness.¹⁴⁴

The intrinsic reason for that seems to be none other than that it is repugnant to right order for the less good to be the *raison d'être* of the greater good. Besides, all authors admit that a greater good cannot be subordinated to a less good as to its *finis qui*. But a greater good which is willed primarily and essentially for another so that it would not exist except for the other, that greater good is ordained to the less as to its *finis qui* not merely as to its *finis cui*. For example, creatures exist for God primarily and essentially: He is their *finis qui*. *A pari*, to will Christ primarily for the redemption of man so that He would have existence primarily and essentially because of sin, is to make the redemption the *finis qui* of Christ. But that is repugnant.

Frassen gives an *a posteriori* reason when he writes: "It is according to divine providence that the lower beings serve the higher: the inanimate beings serve the animate; the vegetative kingdom serves the animal kingdom; the animals serve man."¹⁴⁵

Secondarily, of course, a greater good may exist for a lesser; i. e., the greater may give some of its good to the lesser. But in that case this being-for-someone-else really redounds to the glory of the greater. Man may exist for the dog in so far as he feeds the dog. God exists for man because He gives man existence and grace. Christ exists for man since He brought man

141. *Sum. theol.*, pars 1, q. 65, art. 2.

142. *Ibid.*, pars 3, q. 6, art. 1. Cf. pars 3, q. 56, art. 1; *Contra Gentiles*, lib. 3, c. 17; lib. 4, c. 27.

143. *In II Sent.*, d. 15, q. 1, art. 1, ad 6.

144. *Ibid.*, d. 1, q. 2, art. 3.

145. *De Incarnatione*, lib. 7, p. 253.

redemption. St. Thomas is very clear on this, too: The greater may exist for the lesser in the sense that the greater is useful to the lesser; e. g., a king may exist for a farmer because he procures peace for the farmer.¹⁴⁶ He gives an example when he tells us that the angels can exist for man in the sense that they are useful to man.¹⁴⁷

Scotus' Meaning

So in the sense that Christ is the greatest means and therefore the intermediate end of the other means, and therefore first willed, Scotus' argument is absolutely conclusive. But the question is, Did Scotus understand his argument in that manner? Certainly to him God's glory is the end of all creatures, and Christ is the most perfect creature, the most perfect means towards that end. Did Scotus consider Christ as the end of the other creatures? He states explicitly that Christ's glory is the end of the glory of all the other creatures. Moreover he gives as the reason for the *propinquius finis* this, that otherwise the greater would exist for the lesser, which he thinks irrational. The opposite of that would be that the less perfect means should be for the more perfect. Consequently, I really think that Scotus looked upon Christ not merely as the greatest means among the others, but as the end of all the others. And if that is true, Scotus gave us a metaphysical argument that concludes with certainty. It is the same as the argument given above from the fact that Christ is the End. Scotus did not develop the premise that Christ is the End by searching through the sources of revelation, as I suggested should be done; but he did say that Christ is the greatest means, that nearest to the end. This he could have known only through revelation. Then he argued that the greatest means must be the end of the rest and so first in the mind of God. That seems to be a theological conclusion: Christ is the greatest means to God's glory, is a revealed premise. The greatest means is the intermediate end of the others, is a premise known from reason, as is also this, that the end is first in the mind of an intelligent agent.

Nimis Probat?

From what was said it is clear that this argument does not prove that God had to will the incarnation if He wanted to create anything at all. It does not prove the necessity of the incarnation and thus fall into the error of exaggerated and condemned optimism. It merely proves that if God wanted Christ at any time in His world plan, He had to will Him first. God has a free will. But He cannot do things that are metaphysically impossible, everyone admits that. Likewise, things that are against right reason cannot be willed by God, even though He has a free will. So if it is against right reason to will the greater primarily for the less, God cannot do that. It is repugnant to His wisdom and holiness to do so. Scotus' argument for the Immaculate Conception was one of becomingness; but I think it would be valid at all times. It would be metaphysically possible for God to will a

146. *In II Sent.*, d. 15, q. 1, art. 1, ad 6.

147. *Ibid.*, d. 1, q. 2, art. 3.

Mother defiled by sin for His Son, but it is repugnant to His wisdom and holiness, so He would never do it. Can one object to that: *Nimis probat?* Scotus' argument for the absolute predestination of Christ proves the moral impossibility of the incarnation primarily for the redemption.

Bonum Occasionatum!

Another argument that Scotus gave for the absolute predestination of Christ is this: If Christ were intended primarily for the redemption He would be a *bonum occasionatum*.

Christ, the God-Man, is a greater good by far than the salvation and glory of all other creatures, since Christ by Himself can give greater glory to God than all other creatures together. Note that we are not comparing the glory of men received through Christ the Mediator with the glory of men received through Christ the Redeemer; even though also in this case the former is greater than the latter if Christ came primarily to redeem. That has been settled definitively by the definition of the Immaculate Conception: Mary Immaculate is a greater good than Mary conceived in sin and redeemed.¹⁴⁸ We are comparing the glory of *Christ* Himself with the glory that redeemed *men* would give to God.

Now if that great good which the glory of Christ is, were to exist primarily and essentially because of the less good, redemption, it would be merely an occasioned good. It would not have existence except for the need of the less good. And that is so much more repugnant because, according to the adversaries, as soon as God intended to create intelligent beings that were capable of falling and that He intended to redeem, He decided to send a redeemer in case they actually fell. In other words, the continuance of these creatures in the state of original justice would forestall the great good of the incarnation, but the losing of that original justice by a sinful act, by offending God, would occasion the incarnation.¹⁴⁹ But it is absurd that so great a good as the incarnation should exist primarily because of sin, because of redemption from sin. For it is absurd that any good should be willed primarily for a less good, especially if that less good is demanded by the failure of an inferior means. Notice that here this argument touches the previous argument. The previous argument abstracted from the fact that this less good was occasioned by a failure, and that a sinful failure.

Before Scotus

The above argument was not new with Scotus. St. Bonaventure knew of it and set it up as an objection merely to refute it by saying that the cause of the good was not the evil but the mercy of God. William of Ware used the argument in favor of the primacy of Christ and substantiated it with an

148. Cf. Scotus, *Op Ox.*, lib. 3, d. 3, q. 1.

149. *Rep. Par.*, lib. 3, d. 7, q. 4 (vol. 23, p. 303; Balic, p. 14). N. B. *occasionatum* does not mean that God never thought of redeeming man until Adam fell, and then that fall sort of caught God by surprise. Honorius Augustodunensis and William of Ware made the mistake of taking it in that sense. Cf. Bissen, *Antonianum*, vol. 12 (1937), p. 30; and *La France Franc.* (1932), p. 221.

a *pari* case from St. Anselm which we shall give presently.¹⁵⁰ The Abbot Rupert of Deutz argued for the primacy of Christ with a parallel case: St. Augustine, he says, taught that there would have been generation of children and thus saints for heaven even if Adam had not sinned: that great good did not depend on Adam's sin.¹⁵¹ Likewise, says Abbot Rupert, the great good of the incarnation did not depend on the sin of Adam; the Head and King of all the elect does not depend on sin.¹⁵²

Pre-Scotus Argument

The principle involved in the above argument; *sc.*, that a greater good should not be willed primarily at the occasion of a lesser good, was in use outside of the question of the primacy of Christ. We just saw that St. Augustine used it. St. Thomas borrowed the entire idea from St. Augustine in proving that there would have been human generations in the state of innocence, else sin would have been very necessary for so great a good.¹⁵³ St. Anselm defended the thesis that men are created primarily for themselves and not for taking the place of the fallen angels; else they could rejoice at the fall of the angels and could congratulate themselves over the misfortune of the angels.¹⁵⁴ The same line of reasoning was used by William, Abbot of St. Theodoric, in his *Disputatio adversus Abelardum*, c. 7,¹⁵⁵ by St. Bruno, in his commentary on Ephesians 1:10,¹⁵⁶ and also by the Abbot Hermann in his tract *De Incarnatione Verbi*, c. 2-4.¹⁵⁷

Objection

The objection that if Christ were willed primarily for the redemption there would be no question of a *bonum occasionatum*, because the redemption is greater since a gift is greater if given to a less worthy — that objection is worthless. It is not *ad rem*; as we noted above we are not comparing the good of the incarnation for the glorification of man with the good of the incarnation for the redemption of man primarily: though even in that case the former is greater than the latter, just as Mary Immaculate is greater than Mary freed from sin. We are comparing the glory of Christ in Himself with the glory of the redeemed.

The Salmanticenses object that this argument proves too much: It proves the impossibility of an incarnation willed primarily for the redemption.¹⁵⁸

150. Cf. Bissen, "Question inedite de Guillaume de Ware, O. F. M., sur le motif de l'Incarnation" (Extrait from *Les Etudes Franciscaines*, vol. 46 (1934), pp. 218-222.

151. *De civitate Dei*, lib. 14, c. 23 (*edit. cit.*, p. 47).

152. *De gloria et honore Filii Hominis, super Matth.*, lib. 13, towards the end (Pat. lat., vol. 168, col. 1628).

153. *Sum. theol.*, pars 1, q. 98, art. 1.

154. *Cur Deus Homo?* lib. 1, c. 18 (Pat. lat., vol. 158, col. 381B).

155. Pat. lat. (vol. 180, col. 273C).

156. Pat. lat. (vol. 153, col. 321A).

157. Pat. lat., vol. 180, col. 14B-16D.

158. *Cursus Theologicus* (Victor Palme, Parisiis, 1880), vol. 15, Tract. 21, disp. 2, dub. 1, 40.

The same answer can be given as was given above to the same objection against the preceding argument.

St. Bonaventure set up the objection that sin would be the cause of the incarnation if Christ was willed primarily for the redemption, and he refutes this objection by saying that sin is not the cause of the incarnation, the mercy of God is the cause of the incarnation. I think that we can answer that by saying that the mercy and goodness of God is the ultimate motive of the incarnation at all times, but the primary proximate motive would be the redemption of man, liberation from sin: a greater good would be primarily for a lesser, which, as we saw above, is repugnant. And the fact that that great good was occasioned by the failure of a less good, will always be repulsive to an intelligent mind.

Ad Absurdum

To the above argument about the *bonum occasionatum* the authors often add others that are akin to it, and are linked with each other. For instance, to say that if Christ had come primarily to redeem, sin would have been necessary for His existence or sin would have been useful to Him and to man, is merely presenting the argument of the *bonum occasionatum* in other words, or rather it is a part of that argument.¹⁵⁹

Again, we might say that if Christ came primarily to redeem man from sin, man as well as Christ might rejoice over the fact that Adam lost original justice, because Christ received not only existence but that tremendous glory which He has, and we received the great goods of the incarnation, because of sin. For anyone can really rejoice over that without which he would not exist, and without which others would not share his greatness.¹⁶⁰ St. Anselm argued in that manner, as we saw above. Scotus, too, added this to his argument of *bonum occasionatum*.

Some object that it is false to argue that Christ and men could rejoice over the evil; they would rejoice over the great mercy of God which drew so much good out of so great an evil. Moreover, sin is not the cause of the good but merely the occasion, God's mercy is the cause. Just as St. Mathias was chosen Apostle on the occasion of Judas' defection, and still did not owe Judas any thanks, nor did he rejoice over the misfortune of Judas; he thanked God and rejoiced over the great goodness of God who gave him so great a dignity at the occasion of Judas' fall.¹⁶¹ Frassen answers that by saying that it is true we rejoice over the mercy of God, still it seems we would also have to rejoice over that without which we would never have existed, without which the mercy of God would never have been moved to decree the incarnation.¹⁶²

Finally, if Christ exists primarily for the redemption and would not exist except for the sin of man, both Christ and we should give thanks to Adam for sinning. St. Lawrence of Brindisi states it thus:

159. Frassen, *op. cit.*, p. 254 f.

160. *Ibid.*

161. Salmanticenses, vol. 15, Tract. 21, disp. 2, dub. 1, n. 3.

162. *Op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*

Et quidem, ut verum fatear, si, non peccante homine, Christus natus minime fuisset, magnas teneremur Adamo gratias agere, quia propter Adae peccatum factus esset homo super Angelos aequalis ob hypostaticam unionem.¹⁶³

ARGUMENT 5

The Most Loved Is Loved First

An argument very similar to that of *Ordinate Volens* is this: One who wills in an orderly fashion wills first what he loves most. Now God loves Christ more than all other creatures together; Christ is the Well-beloved of the Father. Therefore God loved Christ first, before all other creatures. The reason for the major is this: If anyone would not love a means first and would love it primarily for the good of another means, then this "most loved" means would no longer be most loved. Didacus of Avendano, S. J., developed this argument nicely:

Addo aliam (rationem), cujus nolo momentum expendere: est tamen viri doctissimi, acutissimi, sapientissimi, a quo illam multos ante annos audivi, nec pauci sunt ex quo ille excedit e vivis. Arguebat sic: Plus Deus diligit Christum, quam caetera omnia; ergo plus illi placet Christum esse, quam caetera. Ex his recte colloigas futuram Incarnationem etiamsi Adam lapsus abfuisset. Nam si non esset futura, plus Deus caetera amaret, quia amare est velle bonum; si ergo Deus existentiam rebus, non Christo tribuisset, plus boni ipsis constat voluisse, quam Christo. Exemplo rem urgere et declarare possumus. Recusat aliquis uxorem ducere amore pecuniae, quia scilicet, pecuniam amat, quam non libet in uxore ornanda, et sustentanda profundere. Sed in mente venit ratio, juxta quam uxore ducta omnes vitentur impensae: hoc pacto ducit, et ductam diligit: sed quis non videat plus uxorem hunc pecuniam amare, quam feminam? pecuniam enim tutam procurat et integram, mulierem non nisi sub ea conditione parum uxori digna admittit. Sic in proposito. Si Deus creaturas absoluta voluntate vult sanctas, Christum autem non nisi occasione peccati decernit, magis convincitur, creaturas amare, quam Christum, quod absit. Christus enim est Filius dilectus, in quo sibi bene placuit (Matt. 17:5). Bene quidem, id est, optime, maxime, summe, incomparabiliter, ut in nullo alio, ut neque in rerum acervo, quae in conspectu ejus sic sint, quasi nihil, et inane reputatae (Is. 40, 17). Cum autem Christus thesaurus sit thesaurorum omnium divinarum divite abundantia plenissimus (Col. 2:3). In quo sunt omnes thesauri. Et haec ex multis pauca, quae Christum verum omnium finem possent ulterius comprobare (*Ephitalamium Christi*).¹⁶⁴

St. Cyril of Alexandria wrote in his day against the Arians that we would then be more excellent than Christ;¹⁶⁵ sc., if God loved us first.

ARGUMENT 6

Totus Beatificabilis

As a matter of fact we are going to be glorified not only in our soul, but also in our body. That we know through revelation. The glory of our body will consist at least partly in the joy that our sentient nature will experience in seeing the glorified body of the God-Man. In other words, we know now that our body too is capable of a supernatural glory. But that capacity for

163. *Mariale*, vol. 1, p. 81.

164. Taken from J.-B. Petit-Bornand, *Proludium* . . . , p. 44, n. 25.

165. *Thesaurus*, assert. 15 (Pat. graec., vol. 75, col. 253C).

supernatural glory in no way depends on sin; in fact, it would be more becoming to glorify the bodily senses if Adam had remained in the state of innocence. Consequently we can conclude that man would have been glorified in his bodily senses even if there had been no sin. But that would demand an incarnation, the Incarnate Word of God. On the one hand, the perfect object of man's beatitude can be no other than God; on the other hand, man's bodily senses can never perceive God in Himself. Therefore God would have to take on human form in order that man might behold Him with bodily eyes too and be perfectly happy. Therefore there would have been an incarnation even if Adam had not sinned.

This argument put in some such way was always a favorite with the advocates of Christ's absolute predestination. They got the basis of this argument from the work *De anima et spiritu*, which they thought was a work of St. Augustine.¹⁶⁶

Propterea enim Deus homo factus est, ut totum hominem in se beatificaret, et tota conversio hominis esset ad ipsum, et tota dilectio hominis esset in ipso, cum sensu carnis videretur per carnem, et a sensu mentis videretur per divinitatis contemplationem.

The first theologian of the Order, Alexander of Hales used this argument and appealed to the above work of Pseudo-Augustine.¹⁶⁷

Popular as this argument has been, it is not conclusive by itself. It shows that the incarnation was quite becoming and appropriate.

ARGUMENT 7

Bonum Sui Diffusivum Est

Goodness naturally tends to diffuse itself. But God is infinitely good; He is the essence of all good. Therefore God would tend to diffuse Himself in the most perfect manner, and that is by a personal union with some created nature. This argument is one of very great becomingness, but nothing more. It has been used chiefly by spiritual writers. St. Thomas borrowed it from Dionysius and used it as a proof for the convenience of the incarnation. However, he does not use it to prove the becomingness of the incarnation even if Adam had not sinned, that is, for its own sake.

Ipse autem natura Dei est essentia bonitatis, ut patet per Dionysium. Unde quidquid pertinet ad rationem boni, conveniens est Deo. Pertinet autem ad rationem boni ut se aliis communicet, ut patet per Dionysium. Unde ad rationem summi boni pertinet quod summo modo se creaturae communicet: quod quidem maxime fit per hoc quod "naturam creatam sic sibi conjungit, ut una persona fiat ex tribus, Verbo, anima et carne," sicut dicit Augustinus.¹⁶⁸

The Capuchin spiritual writer, Mattia da Saló, develops this proof nicely to prove the absolute predestination of Christ:

Troverá in tal modo che la bontá di Dio fu il primo motivo della Incarnazione. Perché é proprio del bene il diffondersi, donarsi, comunicarsi; onde quanto egli é

166. Cap. 9 (Pat. lat., vol. 40, col. 485). This seems to be the work of Hugh of St. Victor.

167. *Sum. theol.*, vol. 4, n. 23, p. 42A (Cologne, q. 2, membr. 13, p. 21).

168. *Sum. theol.*, pars 3, q. 1, art. 1.

maggiore, tanto piu ampiamente si dona, come la luce quanto é maggiore, tanto piu chiaramente é da lungi si diffonde; però la bontà di Dio, che é infinita, si largamente si é donata alle sue creature. E, dando a tutte l'essere, dona se stessa. . . . Questa unione sopravvanza tutte l'altre sopradette, é per lei nobilissimamente ed eccellentissimamente la bontà divina si é comunicata all'uomo, per non lasciare grado alcuno possibile a comunicarsi nel quale non si sia comunicata.¹⁶⁹

St. Francis de Sales writes beautifully in this regard:

The Almighty, seeing from all eternity that He could create an innumerable multitude of creatures, all differing in properties and perfections, to whom He might communicate Himself, also saw that the most excellent method of communication would be by union; because by virtue of union the creature, engrafted as it were on the Divinity, would form with it but one person, with a distinction of nature. As the goodness of God possesses an unbounded inclination to give and communicate itself, it decided to do so by means of union, as I have said. . . . The sovereign Providence of God, conceiving from all eternity the design of creating the world, felt a peculiar, incomparable love of preference, for the most amiable of its productions, which is the Savior of the human race. . . . Thus the Savior of man occupied the first place in the designs of Providence, and in the eternal project of creation.¹⁷⁰

An Observation

The fact that Christ was predestined absolutely, can not be known by man except through revelation. In all but a few of the preceding arguments I have appealed to Sacred Scripture and to Tradition to prove at least one premise. The individual arguments or parts thereof were substantiated by all the texts of Scripture and Tradition at hand. However, I could have taken, let us say, Colossians 1:15-20 or St. Irenaeus to find out how many of the following points are taught there: Is Christ predestined first? Is He the End of all creatures from the beginning? Is He their Exemplar, their Mediator in truth and grace and glory? Is He the one Head of the entire Mystical Body, the Recapitulator of the entire universe? This would have been a tremendous task. One could fill volumes in proving the absolute primacy of Christ in this way. I shall not be able to do more now than just give bare indications of the texts of Scripture that have to be scrutinized and weighed on the scales of Tradition.

From Genesis 2:23-24 and Ephesians 5:32 we can prove that Adam had knowledge of the incarnation even before his disastrous fall.

From Proverbs 8:22 we can prove that Christ was intended as the End and the Mediator and as Exemplar of all creatures.

From Colossians 1:15-20 we can prove that Christ is first in the mind of God as Exemplar, End, Mediator, and Head of the entire Church.

From Ephesians 1:3-10 we can prove that Christ was the End and Mediator of grace and glory of the predestined in the original plan of God.

From Colossians 2:9-10 and Ephesians 1:20-21 we can prove that the angels received all their grace and glory from Christ who is their Head.

From Romans 8:29 we can prove that Christ is the End, the Exemplar, and the Mediator of predestination to divine Sonship independently of sin.

169. *Pratica dell'Orazione Mentale; Introd. ed edizione critica del P. Umile da Genoa, Cap. (Collegio di S. Lorenzo da Brindisi, Assisi, 1931), vol. 1, 118-120.*

170. *Treatise on the Love of God, bk. 2, ch. 4 and 5.*

From the Apocalypse 12 we can prove that the bad angels sinned against Christ and were for that reason cast into hell.¹⁷¹

III. OTHER PURPOSES OF THE INCARNATION

Until now we have dealt with only one point of Christ's absolute primacy; *sc.*, the fact that He was predestined first and absolutely for His own sake. That we could call the primary end of Christ.

Christ was predestined secondarily to be the absolute End and Scope of all creation: all creatures were to be created to give glory to Christ and through Christ to God. Christ was to be the *raison d'être* of all creatures. That is the second element in Christ's absolute primacy. We explained and proved it above when we used it as part of the proof for the absolute predestination of Christ for His own glory.

Again, Christ was predestined secondarily and absolutely as the Exemplar of all creatures, in nature, grace, and glory. This point was treated above in the proof from the universal exemplarism of Christ.

Finally, Christ was predestined secondarily and absolutely as Mediator of all Angels and men, and in a certain broad sense even of all creation so that all the works of God *ad extra* are deified by, and united in, the one Christ Jesus. The explanation and some proofs of this were given above.

The Redemption

So far we have treated the purposes God had in mind in willing the incarnation independently of sin, *i. e.*, the absolute ends of the incarnation. Man sinned and God decreed to redeem him through Christ. Was Christ as Redeemer willed by God primarily for man's sake? Viewing the question superficially one might think so. However, I think it correct to say that God permitted sin, and willed the redemption of man through Christ primarily for Christ's own glory, primarily for the glory that would accrue to Christ through the acts of the redemption, and only secondarily was the redemption willed for the good that man got out of it. That man got something out of the redemption is a doctrine of faith. That the redemption was willed primarily for Christ's glory was taught very clearly by St. Lawrence of Brindisi. It seems that he was the first to make this explicit statement; he is quoted to that effect by the Most Reverend Leonard Bello¹⁷² and by Ugo Lattanzi.¹⁷³

171. Various authors have undertaken to prove the absolute predestination of Christ from Scripture, but there is still ample room for a more thorough and complete investigation according to the latest scientific methods of studying Scripture. The following are some of the works in this field: Risi, Ord. S. Joan. a Deo, *Sul Motivo primario dell'Incarnazione del Verbo* (Roma: Desclée Lefebvre, 1898); Ugo Lattanzi, *Il Primato Universale di Cristo secondo le S. Scritture* (Romae, 1937), 146 pp.; a number of articles in the *Verbum Domini* by Fr. Bover, S. J.; J. B. Bissen, O. F. M., "De Primatu Christi absoluto apud Col. 1:13-20," *Antonianum* 11 (1936), pp. 3-36.

A sample of the work to be done in the field of Tradition is seen in this study: Bissen, O. F. M., "La Tradition sur la Predestination absolue de Jesus Christ du VIIe au IXe siecles," *La France Franciscaine* (1939), pp. 9-34.

172. *Acta Fratrum Minorum*, vol. 52 (1933), p. 301A.

173. *Il Primato universale di Cristo secondo le S. Scritture*, p. 46.

Nec solum prima est creatura praedestinata, sed etiam causa exemplaris atque finalis praedestinationis Sanctorum. . . . Having made secure that absolute predestination of Christ, he continues: "Sic (*sc.*, because he is universal exemplar and finis), ob Christi majorem gloriam, existimo permisisse hominis peccatum, ut magis Christum glorificaret; sicut permisit Lazarum infirmari et mori, ut glorificaretur Filius Dei per eum; sicut permisit ut Joseph a fratribus inique venderetur, quo posset eum in Aegypto glorificare juxta praecostensas visiones. Non enim Deus propterea glorificavit Joseph, quia in eum fratres peccaverunt; sed permisit fratres in eum inique agerent, ut magis magisque glorificaret.¹⁷⁴

This point puts the finishing touches to the absolute primacy of Christ: Christ holds the primacy not only in the order of creation, but also in the order of redemption. He holds the primacy in all orders: "That in all things He may have the first place" (Col. 1:18).

Relation of the Absolute Primacy to Other Revealed Truths

Christ the King — The doctrine of Christ's absolute primacy casts a bright and penetrating light on many of the doctrines of our religion. It puts Christ the King on the highest throne possible. According to this doctrine Christ has the most universal dominion over all creatures possible. It is not surprising, then, that Franciscan theologians and preachers were foremost in the promotion and promulgation of the feast of Christ the King and of devotion to Christ the King. The devotion to Christ the King reaches its climax in the doctrine of Christ's absolute primacy.¹⁷⁵

Sacred Heart — The devotion to the Sacred Heart, which is so popular today, is a devotion to the Heart of Love, to the Heart that loved us immensely and that loves God with an infinite love. The doctrine of the absolute primacy is based on the fact that God is love and wished to communicate His goodness to creatures, not in a stingy way, but in the most perfect and abundant way possible. Scotus expressed that well: "Vult se diligi ab illo qui potest eum summe diligere, loquendo de amore alicujus extrinseci."¹⁷⁶ Could any two doctrines be more akin than these two?¹⁷⁷ P. Ramiere, S. J., the great apostle of the Sacred Heart in the nineteenth century, taught the absolute primacy of Christ constantly.

The Eucharist — The Holy Eucharist is a necessary complement in the present divine economy of grace. It is a necessary link in the procession of the Son from the Father through the Incarnation and then, together with creatures, back again to the Father. It is a necessary part in the complete development of the wonderful organism of the Christian mysteries.¹⁷⁸ Now according to the adversaries of the absolute primacy such a wonderful link in the divine mysteries would have been lacking if there had been no sin. According to the defenders of the absolute primacy, this wonderful link of the Eucharist would have been present in the state of innocence *a fortiori*.

174. *Mariale*, vol. 1, p. 81.

175. Cf. Pere Chrysostome, O. F. M., "La Fete du Christ-Roi et le motif de l'Incarnation," in *Etudes Franciscaines*, vol. 40 (1928), pp. 459-481; 595-611.

176. *Rep. Par.*, lib. 3, d. 7, q. 4 (vol. 23, p. 303; Balic, p. 14).

177. Cf. August. Gemelli, O. F. M., "Votum pro festo impetrando Regalitat's Ss. Cordis Jesu," in *Acta Fratrum Minorum*, vol. 45 (1926), pp. 147-155.

178. Cf. Scheeben, *Mysterien des Christentums* (Herder, Freiburg, 1912), p. 424.

Redemption — The doctrine of the redemption of man from sin is not endangered by the doctrine of Christ's absolute primacy; in fact as we saw above, it is placed in a more glorious light. St. Bonaventure's suspicion that the redemption theory favored piety more, is not true, as St. Albert the Great noted before St. Bonaventure. The absolute primacy of Christ adds a note of profound pity to the redemption: St. Paul's words: "who for joy set before Him, endured a cross" (Hebr. 12:2), take on a deeper meaning. We are inclined to sympathize more with the Christ who would have lived a grand life of happiness with us if we had not sinned, than with a Christ who would never have existed but for our sin. Macedo has a passage to the point:

Immo addo augeri istud magis eo modo et amplicificari. Nam multo major est misericordia Dei erga genus humanum Christum prius decretum propter suam glorificationem et excellentiam, cum tanta gratia et donis beatitudinis et praerogativis singularis praestantiae glorificandum, ex vi sequentis decreti ordinarii amandari ad miseras mortalitatis et passibilitatis per vulnera et mortem et opprobrium crucis, quam si de novo ad illas destinaretur: mirabilis quippe est dejecti quemquam ex alto fastigio ad infimum statum miseriae propter alios miseros redimendos, quam eum nondum conditum neque editum de novo poni in infimo statu, ad miserorum ordinem redegi.¹⁷⁹

Mystical Union with Christ — The doctrine of Christ's absolute primacy, involving as it does the absolute mediatorship of Christ in grace and glory, climaxes the doctrine of the mystical union of all creation with Christ. It makes Christ the Head not only of men but also of angels: All angels and men form but one Mystical Body with Christ. Christ puts harmony and unity into God's work of creation and salvation.

Mary — Mary was predestined with Christ in the same degree according to Pope Pius IX. Consequently if Christ was predestined absolutely and independently of sin, then Mary was, too. If Christ is the universal End, Exemplar, and Mediator of all creatures, then Mary is End, Exemplar, and Mediatrix of all creatures, but in a secondary rôle. According to the Most Reverend Leonard Bello the doctrine of the absolute primacy of Christ "Beatissimam quoque Virginem summe exaltat. Etenim omnia quae de Christo praedicantur, Matri ejus gloriosissimae (in suo utique ordine, videlicet sub Christo et per Christum) merito attribuuntur."¹⁸⁰

Immaculate Conception — That Mary should have been immaculate at the very first moment of her life, is but natural if she was predestined with Christ before all creatures, before the sin of Adam, to be the Mediatrix of all graces. She who guarded the divine treasury of graces could not be deprived of them by Adam: she gave these graces to Adam in the beginning and she gave them back to him after he lost them.

Spirituality — Christo-centric spirituality is at its best when placed under the doctrine of Christ's absolute primacy; when we acknowledge Christ as the end of all our strivings, and the exemplar of all our actions. United with Christ, the Masterpiece of creation, the Well-beloved Son, we are able to offer a homage to God that is worthy of Him: we are able to adore and to praise and to thank and to petition and to propitiate God in a Christlike manner. By acknowledging the absolute primacy of Christ we climb up to

179. *Collationes S. Thomae et Scoti in III Sent.* (Patavii, 1680), p. 163b.

180. *Acta Fratrum Minorum*, vol. 52 (1933), p. 301b.

the top of Mount Thabor with Christ, and fortified by that grand vision of the God-Man, we can endure the tragedy of Calvary. The Man of Sorrows will be more lovable and adorable the more we realize the height from which we have dragged Him by our sins.

A Divine Symphony

The universe of creatures is an immense divine symphony orchestra. God is the organizer and director. He chose Christ as the first and foremost player, the solo first violinist, and His Mother was chosen to play the piano accompaniment. They did not appear in the first numbers; they were to come later. Adam, who was never intended to be solo first violinist, came first; but he broke down in the prelude of the first number, and the whole orchestra would have collapsed if Christ had not decided to come anyhow and build it up again by His masterful playing. Christ was never intended to play "second fiddle" in case Adam should fail. He was intended from the beginning to be solo first violinist. All other players were chosen primarily for His greater honor. Without Him the symphony of the universe would never have been so delightful. Together with Him the orchestra of the universe offers infinite delight to the heavenly Father.

DISCUSSION

FR. VENARD KELLY, O. F. M. CAP.: — It is true that all theologians believe in the primacy of Christ and, I may add, all Catholics too. But the question is this: is it a relative or an absolute primacy? Those who subordinate the incarnation to the redemption give Christ a relative primacy. They maintain that without sin there would be no Incarnate Word. In their opinion Christ cannot strictly be called the Head of the angels because they owe Him nothing. Christ is the Omega but not the Alpha. Yet Christ calls Himself the Alpha and the Omega, and those who give Him the absolute primacy see Him truly as the Alpha, the beginning of the creation of God (Apoc. 3:14). In the building of the universe, Christ is the foundation, the arch, and the keystone. The architect, God, conceived the plan and made Christ its sure foundation, so that even the accidental sin of Adam did not shake that building whose Foundation had already been laid. (Cf. St. Cyril of Alexandria, Migne, P.G. 75, col. 249-295).

This is the Scotistic and therefore Franciscan divine economy:

The Order of the Divine Will:

1. God loves Himself
2. God loves Himself in possible creatures
3. God willed Christ (The supreme Glorifier of the Blessed Trinity)
4. God through Christ desired the angels
5. God through Christ desired men
6. Through Christ God willed all creatures plus the universe
7. There occurred the sin of Adam
8. God willed Christ as the Redeemer

The Thomistic Order of the Divine Will:

1. God loves Himself
2. God loves Himself in possible creatures
3. God creates angels
4. God creates men
5. God creates inferior creatures
6. There occurs the sin of Adam
7. God wills Christ as the Redeemer

For my part, the greatest glory of Scotus is his doctrine of the absolute primacy of Christ. It is the heart of his Christology, rooted in the absolute predestination of Christ.

In 1933, the Most Rev. Father General Leonard Bello, O. F. M., addressed to all his religious brethren an encyclical letter on the absolute primacy of Christ. Father General considered the time opportune to establish more firmly the great Scotistic thesis on Christ in all its sublimity. All the branches of the Franciscan Order would do well to study and spread this grand doctrine.

Maximum Opus Dei

For those who hold this doctrine, Christ was the first and chief work God had decreed from all eternity. All else, visible and invisible, was for the sake of Christ and His glory. They maintain that Christ as the *Maximum Opus Dei* was also foreseen and designed by God: 1) as the One who should render to the Blessed Trinity supreme adoration and love by reason of the love of His Sacred Heart; 2) as the *raison d'être* and final cause of all existing things, the exemplar of the entire supernatural economy, and of all the works of God *ad extra*; 3) as the universal Mediator and Head, both of angels and of men, by reason of His fullness of grace. This is the magnificent splendor of Christ shown us by Scotus, a splendor whose dawn was announced by the Herald of the Great King, Francis of Assisi.

The main theses of Blessed Scotus, as Father Longpre has written, form a sublime metaphysical poem in praise of the adorable Humanity of Christ. There is no other theologian, who traces the human outlines of the Word made flesh, with such subtle delicacy. The entire actual order of things, as Scotus explains it, follows from the predestination of Christ, the Primate. The *Vult Deus alios condiligentes* of the Marian Doctor is the final explanation of the entire order of nature, grace, and glory; it is the reason of the very predestination of the Incarnate Word.

Not a Condition of Existence

Christ suffered the death on the Cross *not* as a condition of His own existence but as a remedy for our salvation, having put aside for a little while that external and visible glory which was His and which He would have shown us as King of Glory if we had not sinned. On account of sin, the plan of incarnation included redemption. However, the plan remained unchanged in so far as all things were to be restored to God the Father or "recapitulated" in and through Jesus Christ. The redemption, therefore, is a still deeper manifestation of God's love. The redemption is a quasi-part of the grander, vaster and more profound plan of the incarnation. All this requires what Francis, Duns Scotus, Lawrence of Brindisi and so many others affirm: *the absolute and eternal predestination of Christ and His consequent Primacy*. Monsieur Blondel writes that the Church may soon decide in favor of this opinion.

Dostoevsky gave expression to this doctrine when he wrote: "I have never been able to conceive mankind without Christ" (Karl Flegler, *Wrestlers with Christ*, translated by E. I. Watkin, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1936, p. 210).

Pascal wrote: "Apart from Christ we know neither what our life nor what our death is; we do not know what God is nor what we ourselves are" (*Thoughts*).

The sublime lines of Gerard Manley Hopkins on Christ may well serve as a summary of the absolute Primacy of Christ:

I kiss my hand
To the stars, lovely asunder
Starlight, wafting him out of it; and
Glow, glory in thunder;
Since, though he is under the world's splendor and wonder,
His mystery must be in stressed, stressed;
For I greet him the days I meet him, and bless when I understand.¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ From "The Wreck of the Deutschland" in *Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*. Edited with Notes by Robert Bridges, 2nd Edit., New York, Oxford Univ. Press, 1938, p. 13.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS

The Committee on Resolutions of the XXIV Annual Meeting of the Franciscan Educational Conference respectfully submits the following resolutions:

1. To His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, on the occasion of this jubilee year of his consecration, the Conference renews its obedience and loyalty.
2. To all members of the Hierarchy the Conference expresses its gratitude for their interested co-operation in its work.
3. To the Most Reverend Ministers General of the three families of the First Order of St. Francis, to the Very Reverend Ministers Provincial and Commissaries of all the affiliated Provinces and Commissariats, the Conference offers its thanks for their constant encouragement and support.
4. To the Very Reverend Wenceslaus Krzycki, O. F. M., Minister Provincial of Sacred Heart Province; to the Reverend John Koebele, O. F. M., Guardian of Quincy College; to the Reverend Marion Habig, O. F. M., chargé d'affaires, and to all the members of the Franciscan community in Quincy, the Conference is very grateful for their courteous hospitality during the days of this meeting.
5. To Santa Barbara Province the Conference offers its fraternal sympathy on the death of a former Minister Provincial and member of this Conference, Fr. Turibius Deaver, O. F. M.
6. To the Catholic University of America the Conference extends its sincere condolences on the death of its Rector, His Excellency, Bishop Joseph M. Corrigan.
7. Whereas the just recognition of Franciscan philosophy is the earnest desire of all Franciscans, the Conference declares that the *Dictionary of Philosophy* edited by Dagobert D. Runes (Philosophical Library, N. Y., 1942), although possessing many commendable features, is uncritical in its treatment of various Franciscan topics.
8. Whereas the furtherance of genuine Franciscan doctrine requires an increased study of the original sources of Franciscan thought, be it resolved that:

- 1) steps be taken to make these Franciscan sources more available to scholars and students in general;
- 2) lecturers endeavor to become better acquainted with the writings of the great exponents of Franciscan spirituality, philosophy, and theology in order to instill in their students a deeper appreciation of these Franciscan treasures;
- 3) a medium of exchange be established by which extant copies and editions of Franciscan works be made more accessible;
- 4) bibliographical information concerning noteworthy and rare Franciscan works in America be submitted for publication in *Franciscan Studies*;
- 5) reprints and translations especially of the most important sources of Franciscan thought be promoted.

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