

## SANJUANIST DOCTRINE ON THE HUMAN MODE OF OPERATION OF THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUE OF FAITH

According to St. John of the Cross, God has created us « only for Himself »<sup>1</sup>, that is, to enjoy eternal life<sup>2</sup>. Giving the definition of the latter which is found in the Gospel of John the Evangelist, John of the Cross states that « this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and your Son Jesus Christ, whom you have sent »<sup>3</sup>. He explains the definition in the following way. The beatific vision<sup>4</sup> consists in the knowledge of the divine essence<sup>5</sup>, « face to face »<sup>6</sup>, or as God Himself knows it<sup>7</sup>. In order to arrive at this knowledge, the human faculties have to be transformed, by participation, into divine faculties<sup>8</sup>.

As we will see in the appropriate place, the transformation of the human faculties into divine ones in order to enjoy the beatific vision consists in the participation of the soul not only in the divine nature but also in the Holy Trinity. Once united to the Trinity « in which the soul becomes deiform and God by participation », the soul knows and loves « in the Trinity together with the Trinity and in the same manner as the Trinity ». In this consists « being transformed into the three persons in power and wisdom and love, and in this the soul is like to God, and, in order that the soul should come to this, God created it in His image and likeness »<sup>9</sup>. The degree of clarity of the beatific vision in the next life depends upon the degree of divine transformation attained by the soul in this life<sup>10</sup>.

*The incapacity of creatures and of human nature to elevate man to divine transformation.* A philosophical principle which

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<sup>1</sup> CB-Anotación.

<sup>2</sup> S, 3, 27, 4; CB, 38, 1.

<sup>3</sup> CB, 37, 1.

<sup>4</sup> CB, 39, 1; LI, 2, 32.

<sup>5</sup> CA, 1, 3; CB, 1, 3, 4, 5.

<sup>6</sup> CB, 37, 2.

<sup>7</sup> N, 2, 4, 2.

<sup>8</sup> CA, 38, 4; CB, 39, 4, 6.

<sup>9</sup> CB, 39, 4; See CA, 38, 4.

<sup>10</sup> S, 2, 5, 4, 8-11.

St. John never tires of repeating is that God is infinite and creatures finite<sup>11</sup>. God is therefore incomprehensible to the understanding<sup>12</sup>, He surpasses its limitations<sup>13</sup>, and « does not come under things reached by the understanding, or by appetite, or imagination, or by any other sense »<sup>14</sup>. The distance between God and any creature is infinite. As a result, « it is impossible that the understanding grasp God by means of creatures, whether they be heavenly or earthly, since there exists no proportion of similitude between them and God: »<sup>15</sup> « God falls under no genus or species, while creatures do »<sup>16</sup>. It follows then that « in order that the understanding be disposed for this union, it must be clean and empty of everything which can fall under sense, and naked and unoccupied of everything which can fall with clarity into the understanding »<sup>17</sup>. Another reason for this is the following:

In order that the soul arrive at supernatural transformation, it is obvious that it must be darkened and transposed of everything which it naturally contains, things which are sensible and rational. Because *supernatural* means that which rises above the natural so that the natural remains below<sup>18</sup>.

We could multiply such quotes almost without end. One only has to look at *The Active Night of the Spirit* (books I-III of the *Ascent*) and he will find these ideas repeated on almost every page. This comparison between the natural and supernatural is also widely found in *The Spiritual Cantic* and in *The Living Flame of Love*. The doctrine that God is infinite and creatures finite is common enough in Christianity so that we need not quote John further in this regard. However, there is another conclusion of importance implied in what has just been stated. Not only does there exist an infinite distance between creatures and God so that no creature can serve as a proximate means for union with Him, but also from a finite human nature as the interior cause of human operations, only finite operations or activities can be produced.

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<sup>11</sup> S, 1, 4, 5 among many places where the same can be found.

<sup>12</sup> S, 3, 12, 1; LI, 3, 48.

<sup>13</sup> S, 2, 4, 5.

<sup>14</sup> S, 2, 4, 4.

<sup>15</sup> S, 2, 8, 3.

<sup>16</sup> S, 3, 12, 1.

<sup>17</sup> S, 2, 9, 1.

<sup>18</sup> S, 2, 4, 2.

For the transformation concerning which we are treating, the human powers must become divinized. The understanding, in some way, must be changed « from human and natural into divine », and the will must learn to love God not with a natural human love but with a divine love, « with the force and purity of the Holy Spirit »<sup>19</sup>. But such is farther than human forces can reach. Since each thing has « its operation, according to the being which it has or life which it lives »<sup>20</sup>, there are two things « which are above human capabilities; and these are: to dismiss the natural by natural ability, which cannot happen; and to touch and unite oneself to the supernatural, which is much more difficult, and to say the truth, by natural ability alone, it is impossible »<sup>21</sup>. Not only do finite objects not serve as a proximate means for union with God but neither can *natural human operations*.

Correctly ordered natural operations, however, serve as a remote means for transformation, that is, they dispose the soul for God's operations; but the transformation in God by participation cannot come about when the soul merely works on the natural level<sup>22</sup>. « The supernatural », says St. John, « does not fall under any natural mode, nor does it have anything to do with it »<sup>23</sup>. Man can only dispose himself for union with God in this life; he cannot effect it. God Himself must change the human understanding and love of things into a divine understanding and love<sup>24</sup>. « And this is obvious », says St. John, « because if the soul wishes to operate by its natural force, its works can be nothing more than natural, because by itself it can do nothing more; because to the supernatural, the soul does not move itself nor can it, but God must move it and place it in the supernatural »<sup>25</sup>.

If human nature cannot elevate itself to the divine, then by what means does God divinize human operations, giving them a participation in His own? If man is going to reach his supernatural end, he needs divine virtues, that is, powers proportioned to that end, and these are called by St. John the theological vir-

<sup>19</sup> N, 2, 4, 2.

<sup>20</sup> S, 3, 16, 6. Also see LI, 2, 34.

<sup>21</sup> S, 3, 2, 13.

<sup>22</sup> S, 3, 13, 4.

<sup>23</sup> LI, 3, 34.

<sup>24</sup> S, I, 5, 7; 2, 5, 4, 5, 7; 3, 2, 2; N, 2, 13; CA, 35, 6, LI, III, 32 are just a few places where this can be found.

<sup>25</sup> S, 3, 13, 3.

tues. As far as he is concerned, they are the virtues which are properly Christian and not the acquired virtues, which are pagan<sup>26</sup>. The theological virtues — Faith, Hope, and Charity — have as their function to separate the soul from everything finite in order to unite it with the infinite<sup>27</sup>. These are the only proportioned means to bring the soul to divine transformation, because their acts, as presently we shall see, consist in a human participation in the divine immanent operations and, for that reason, in the persons of the Trinity.

#### THE VIRTUE OF FAITH: ITS OBJECT AND LIGHT

*The virtue of faith and the symbol.* - Faith, says St. John, is the proper and accommodated means for union with God<sup>28</sup>. Repeating the thought which we have already seen, St. John states that « nothing created or thought can serve the understanding as a proximate means to union with God, and rather everything which the understanding can reach serves the soul more as an impediment than as a means, if the soul wishes to tie itself to it »<sup>29</sup>. If this would be so, then we must discuss a question of supreme importance in order to better understand the thought of St. John, namely, what has the creed to do with the theological virtue of faith? Do not the articles and propositions of the creed serve as proximate means for union with God? Do they not consist in the revelation of the divine substance? Do they not reveal God as He is? According to the doctrine of St. John of the Cross, certainly not! God is infinite; every concept, word, or image is finite. For this reason, none of these can tell us in a proportioned way what God is in Himself. True that the articles of faith lead to the knowledge of God which reason itself can obtain through philosophy. But even admitting this, the articles cannot tell us what God is in a way which is proportioned to His divine essence. They cannot do this since they differ infinitely from His being. If faith is the proper and proximate means for reaching union, it has to be proportioned to this end; it has to have some befittingness and similitude to the end so

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<sup>26</sup> S, 3, 27, 3.

<sup>27</sup> N, 2, 21, 11; S, 2, 6, 1; 8, 3, 4.

<sup>28</sup> S, 2, 8, 1. Also see S, 2, 16, 12; 24, 8; 30, 5; N, 2, II, 5.

<sup>29</sup> S, 2, 8, 1.

that one can reach it<sup>30</sup>. But no means can have a proximate similitude with God and be finite. The only thing which has proportion or essential similitude with the infinite is the infinite itself. It follows that the faith concerning which St. John speaks here is not a mere belief in images and concepts, a belief in a revelation made merely in terms which man can understand and for this reason, which merely enters by hearing; but the faith concerning which John speaks is an experience of the divinity, of what these words of the creed inadequately symbolize.

In order that the reader may not misunderstand his doctrine, St. John never tires of repeating one fundamental philosophical principle — no creature can serve as a proximate means for union with God:

Concerning which we must notice that among all superior and inferior creatures, there is none which proximately unites with God or has a similitude with His being. Because, although it is true that all have, as the theologians say, a certain relation to God and a certain trace of God — some more and others less, according to their degree of being — between God and them there is no *essential* (emphasis is ours) similitude, rather the distance which there is between His divine being and their being is infinite. And for this reason, it is impossible that the understanding can penetrate into God by means of creatures<sup>31</sup>.

From this quote, it should be clear that the similitude or likeness necessary in the means for them to unite the soul with God is an *essential* one and cannot consist in a mere analogy. It follows that the faith concerning which John treats is not a mere belief in a creed.

Following along with this line of reasoning, St. John tells us that « it is obvious that none of these finite notices can guide the soul immediately to God ». In order to arrive at God, the soul « rather has to go by not understanding than by wishing to understand, and rather by closing its eyes and putting itself in darkness than by opening its eyes in order to arrive closer to the divine ray ». And he continues by saying, « from this it follows that the contemplation by which the understanding has sublimest notice of God is called *Mystical Theology*, which means secret wisdom of God, because it is secret to the same understanding which receives it »<sup>32</sup>. The faith concerning which John

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<sup>30</sup> S, 2, 8, 2.

<sup>31</sup> S, 2, 8, 3.

<sup>32</sup> S, 2, 8, 6.

treats, then, is a mystical experience; it is the science of love or contemplation which « is an infused loving notice of God, which simultaneously illumines and enamors the soul to the point of elevating it by degrees to God its creator »<sup>33</sup>. If the soul is to come to uniting itself with God in this life and to communicating immediately with Him, « it necessarily has *to unite itself with darkness* ... which is the union of love, although in obscurity in faith »<sup>34</sup>.

In order that the reader may not believe that the doctrine explained here is to be found only in one place of the works of John of the Cross, let us cite others. In the second paragraph of the third chapter of the second book of the *Ascent*, St. John says that man, « by himself, is unable to know anything except in a natural way, which knowledge consists only in what is given to the senses ». That soul, then, « which is to come to uniting itself in union with God, must not go by understanding or by attaching itself to pleasure, or to sense, or to the imagination, but by believing His being, which does not fall into the understanding, or under appetite, or under imagination, or under any other sense »<sup>35</sup>. The belief concerning which John treats is not merely a belief in finite articles. It is a belief in the infinite being of God, which being is experienced in darkness<sup>36</sup>. For this reason, St. John says the following:

a soul is greatly hindered from coming to this high state of union with God when it becomes attached to some understanding, or sensing, or imagining, or some opinion or will, or manner, or any other work or thing, not knowing how to detach itself from all that. Because, as we say in the following, God is above all this, even though it be the most that one can know or enjoy; and thus one must pass beyond all things to unknowing<sup>37</sup>.

From this, it can be seen once more that faith is « mystical intelligence, which is confused or obscure »<sup>38</sup>. It is infused contemplation<sup>39</sup>, through which God Himself is experienced<sup>40</sup>.

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<sup>33</sup> N, 2, 18, 5.

<sup>34</sup> S, 2, 9, 4.

<sup>35</sup> S, 2, 4, 4.

<sup>36</sup> S, 2, 26; CA, 13-14, 5, 15; CB, 14-15, 5, 15; GA, 30, 3; CB, 19, 4.

<sup>37</sup> S, 2, 4, 4.

<sup>38</sup> S, 2, 24, 4.

<sup>39</sup> N, 1, 10, 6. Also see S, 2, 13, 4, 6, 7.

<sup>40</sup> CA, 11, 3; CB, 12, 4.

*The darkness of faith and the symbol.* - A difficulty to our interpretation may be presented by the following quote. St. John states that faith is the « only proximate and proportionate means for one to be united to God ». And then he adds the following:

Because such is the similitude between it and God, that there is no other difference but God being seen or believed. Because as God is infinite, thus faith proposes Him to us as infinite; and just as God is one and three, faith proposes Him to us as one and three; and just as God is darkness for our understanding, thus also faith blinds and darkens our understanding. As a result, by this only means, God manifests Himself to the soul in divine light, one which exceeds every understanding. It follows, then, that so much the more the soul has faith, so much the more is it united to God<sup>41</sup>.

It might seem from this quote that St. John is in fact affirming against our interpretation that faith is basically and primarily in the articles of the creed and, as a result, operates according to the so-called human mode. After all, does he not state that faith proposes God to us as infinite, triune, etc.? And is he not talking of the creed which tells us these things concerning God? In our opinion, it would be indefensible to sustain that John here talks of the articles of faith as concrete, sensible, finite signs. He already has told us quite clearly that nothing finite can serve as a proximate means for union with God, that no creature, not even the angels of heaven, have an essential similitude with God and, as a result, no creature can serve as a proximate means for this union. The belief concerning which he talks here, as should be more or less obvious from what has preceded, consists in contemplation or mystical theology. Mystical theology also is a knowledge of God. And due to it, the soul experiences God as He is. As God is infinite, this experience proposes Him to us as infinite. As He is three and one, contemplation proposes Him to us as three and one. And as God, due to His infinity and our finitude, is darkness for our understanding, contemplation, in the stages before spiritual matrimony at least, literally blinds and darkens our understanding, stripping it and devoiding it « of all intelligible forms », by which it knows natural objects<sup>42</sup>. « In the presence of faith », says St. John, our « natural light becomes deprived and blind »<sup>43</sup>. This, as should be obvious, does

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<sup>41</sup> S, 2, 9, 1.

<sup>42</sup> S, 2, 14, 10.

<sup>43</sup> S, 2, 4, 5.

not come about by belief in finite articles. On the contrary, the theologians of the Middle Ages filled volume after volume due to the new sight given them through the articles. It is only by closing one's eyes and being in obscurity from « all its natural and proper lights » that the soul « will see supernaturally »<sup>44</sup>. Through the mere belief in the articles, the natural lights of the soul are not blinded and obscured. On the contrary, it is only through these lights that the creed can in any way be known and understood.

Let us continue with other quotes concerning the nature of faith. St. John uses a doctrine which was common in his day:

Faith, say the theologians, is a habit of the soul which is both certain and obscure. The reason for its being an obscure habit is because it makes us believe in truths revealed by God Himself, which truths are above every natural light and exceed all human understanding without any proportion<sup>45</sup>.

Once more, we are confronted with the possibility of a double interpretation of these words: the one which is so common in our day involving the so-called human manner of belief in the articles of the creed, and the mystical interpretation of St. John, arrived at by deducing the necessary conclusions from the premises which he has given us. Belief or faith, as St. John understands it, is that which « penetrates heaven » and unites the soul « in heavenly intelligences »<sup>46</sup>. This is the reason why the light of faith is excessive and causes darkness in the understanding. As the light of the sun « deprives other sources of their light so that they do not seem to be lights when the sun shines, and as the sun overcomes our passive power » of sight, depriving of sight and blinding it, thus also « the light of faith, by its great excess, oppresses and overcomes that of the understanding which by itself only extends to natural science »<sup>47</sup>. Once more we wish to repeat that such a deprivation is not found in the belief in the finite words of the symbol. When one but believes in the words, and the images and concepts communicated through them, one is not blinded to his other notices. But in the presence of the faith concerning which St. John treats, the understanding remains deprived and blinded « of all other no-

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<sup>44</sup> S, 2, 4, 7.

<sup>45</sup> S, 2, 3, 1.

<sup>46</sup> S, 2, 14, 11.

<sup>47</sup> S, 2, 3, 1.



tices and knowledge »<sup>48</sup>. In our opinion, there is no place in the doctrine of St. John for the naturalist interpretation of faith formerly mentioned. According to St. John, in the presence of faith, the soul remains in darkness « of all light from sense and understanding », and « leaves behind every natural and rational limit... and penetrates into the profundity of God »<sup>49</sup>. We hope that by now it is clear that when John talks of faith, he talks of mystical intelligence. However, we must still treat of several things pertaining to faith: the object experienced (the object of faith), the light by which the object is experienced (the light of faith), and the assent to this object (the assent of faith).

*The object communicated by faith.* - By means of this divine light of contemplation, the soul is deprived and darkened « of its natural intelligence »<sup>50</sup>, and the reason for this is that in so far as it enjoys mystical intelligence, that which is communicated to the soul is the « sublimity of the divine wisdom, which exceeds the talent of the soul, and for this reason, is darkness to the soul »<sup>51</sup>. Contemplation is dark for the understanding because that which is known is the infinite wisdom of God<sup>52</sup>. But in what does such wisdom consist?

God knows all things in knowing Himself. The object of His understanding is the idea of Himself which He has generated from all eternity and which is identified with His own being. This idea is His interior Word<sup>53</sup>, His Verbum<sup>54</sup>, or His only begotten Son<sup>55</sup>, the Wisdom of God<sup>56</sup>, by which He created all things<sup>57</sup>. The object which is communicated to the human understanding through contemplative prayer is this same divine wisdom<sup>58</sup>, which in this life is communicated by faith<sup>59</sup>. The reason why faith is the proximate means for bringing the soul to union with God is that through faith the very Son of God, in His divine nature, is communicated to the soul. And this same

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<sup>48</sup> S, 2, 3, 4.

<sup>49</sup> S, 2, 1, 1.

<sup>50</sup> N, 2, 5, 3.

<sup>51</sup> N, 2, 5, 2.

<sup>52</sup> N, 2, 17, 11. Also see N, 2, 17, 7, 8; 21, 11.

<sup>53</sup> S, 2, 3, 5.

<sup>54</sup> LI, 2, 17; 3, 3.

<sup>55</sup> C, 2, 7; 3, 3; CB, 7.

<sup>56</sup> CA, 36, 1; CB, 37, 2.

<sup>57</sup> C, 5, 1.

<sup>58</sup> CA, 36, 1; CB, 37, 2.

<sup>59</sup> S, 2, 39, 6; C, 7, 5.

Son of God, who is the object of the divine understanding by nature and of the human understanding through participation, guides the soul to complete union with Himself in this life<sup>60</sup>, which union constitutes spiritual matrimony, that is, the participant transformation into the Son<sup>61</sup>. In so far as the human understanding only participates in this knowledge, no matter how bright and clear such knowledge may be in this life, it can always be considered dark in relation to what the soul will receive in the next life.

*The light of faith.* - It should not be difficult to surmise what the light of faith is. Since each thing acts according to the degree of being which it has<sup>62</sup>, only one light has the capacity to generate or communicate the Son of God to men, and this light is that of God the Father. God, says St. John, is not only the object of the soul's knowledge but also is its light<sup>63</sup>. Speaking of meditation and the spiritual exercises of the soul, concerning which we have already made some allusions, St. John tells us:

However much the pleasure and powers of man are exercised and enjoyed, they are not enjoyed spiritually and divinely but rather humanly and naturally, as other things are enjoyed, because supernatural goods do not go from man to God, but come from God to man<sup>64</sup>.

If the soul is going to enter into contemplation, the contemplation of the Son can only be communicated « from the Father of lights »<sup>65</sup>. God the Father is the only one who can illuminate « the understanding divinely in the wisdom of the Son »<sup>66</sup>. « In beatitude », says John, « where it is already day to the blessed angels and souls..., (the Father) communicates and pronounces the *Word*, which is His Son in order that they know Him and enjoy Him. And the *Night*, which is the faith of the Church Militant, where it is still night, shows forth knowledge to the Church and, as a consequence, to any soul, which is to the soul as night, since it is deprived of clear beatific wisdom. And in the presence of faith, the soul is blinded of its natural light »<sup>67</sup>. God the Father

<sup>60</sup> CB, 36, 6.

<sup>61</sup> SC, 1, 10.

<sup>62</sup> S, 3, 26, 6.

<sup>63</sup> LI, 3, 70.

<sup>64</sup> N, 2, 16, 5.

<sup>65</sup> N, 2, 16, 5.

<sup>66</sup> LI, 1, 15.

<sup>67</sup> S, 2, 3, 5.

not only illumines the soul in this life through the contemplation of faith, but He also illumines the soul in the next through the contemplation of full vision. His illuminative power is not only called the light of faith but also the « light of glory »<sup>68</sup>.

Showing the communicative operation of the Father, St. John tells us in his *Spiritual Canticle* that the Son is hidden in « the bosom of the Father (John 1, 18), which is the divine essence, which is strange to every mortal eye and hidden from every human understanding »<sup>69</sup>. The soul, in this part of the *Canticle*, does not ask the Father for the vision of faith of this life, but « the presence and clear vision of His essence, with which it desires to be satisfied and certified in glory »<sup>70</sup>. « Desiring union with the Divinity of the Word, her spouse », the bride of the *Canticles*, as the bride-soul now, « beseeches the *Father* [emphasis is ours], saying: *Indica mihi ubi pascas, ubi cubes in meridie*. Which means: Show me where you eat and where you rest at midday »<sup>71</sup>. St. John interprets this passage of Scripture in the following manner:

By beseeching Him to show where He eats, the soul was asking Him to show her the essence of the divine Word, because the Father does not glory or feed in any other thing than in the Word His only Son since the latter is the glory of the Father. By asking Him to indicate the place where He rests at midday, the soul was beseeching the same thing, because the Son alone is the delight of the Father, Who rests in no other place or fits in any other place than in His beloved Son, in Whom He totally rests, communicating to Him His whole essence at midday, that is in eternity, where the Father always generates the Son and has Him generated<sup>72</sup>.

In *The Living Flame of Love*, this communication of the Son to men by the Father is called by St. John the delicate touch of the tender hand. The hand « is the pious and omnipotent Father »; and the touch of this hand in the soul is the « splendour of the glory and figure of the divine substance (Heb. 1, 3), which is the only begotten Son »<sup>73</sup>. And « although in this life He is not enjoyed as perfectly as in glory, this touch, because it is a touch of God, tastes of eternal life »<sup>74</sup>.

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<sup>68</sup> S, 2, 34, 2.

<sup>69</sup> SC, 1, 3.

<sup>70</sup> SC, 1, 4.

<sup>71</sup> SC, 1, 6.

<sup>72</sup> SC, 1, 5.

<sup>73</sup> LIB, 2, 16.

<sup>74</sup> LI, 2, 21.

*The Holy Spirit.* - We have seen that two of the divine persons constituting the Trinity are intimately connected with the virtue of faith. Let us turn briefly to the third person and then see His role in the operation of this virtue. Above all, the Holy Spirit is charity<sup>75</sup>, the love which God has for Himself<sup>76</sup>, which proceeds from the Father to the Son<sup>77</sup>. As God is in God as the Word, under the mode of a similitude, God is also within God as the beloved is within the lover<sup>78</sup>, moving the lover to the beloved; that is to say, that the Holy Spirit is the aspiration of love « which the Father aspirates in the Son and the Son in the Father »<sup>79</sup>. If the soul is to arrive at the state of spiritual matrimony in this life or in the next, it has to love God « by the Holy Spirit, as the Father and Son mutually love one another »<sup>80</sup>. As a result, it is necessary that the soul's powers become transformed into those of the Trinity<sup>81</sup>. It can be seen that the acts of the theological virtue of charity are not reducible to natural human acts, nor should they be confused with such. The acts of the theological virtue of charity consist in working by participation what God does by nature, that is, in participating in the divine aspiration which is the Holy Spirit<sup>82</sup>, leaving behind the low human *mode* of loving God for the sublime love which He has for Himself<sup>83</sup>. Through the theological virtue of charity, the love of the soul becomes truly divine by participation<sup>84</sup>.

*Charity and contemplation.* - That which moves man to act in the natural order, when he acts properly as a man, is his rational desire. His will directs all the faculties necessary to obtain an end. If man is to be moved in the supernatural order, he must be moved through his will by God. The divine movement of the human will, by which man participates in the Holy Spirit, is what constitutes an act of charity.

It is well worth repeating once more that for St. John an act of charity should not be confused with the normal human

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<sup>75</sup> N, 2, 4, 2.

<sup>76</sup> CA, 12, 10; CB, 13, 11.

<sup>77</sup> CA, 12, 10; CB, 13, 11.

<sup>78</sup> CA, 11, 6; CB, 12, 7. Also the poem *On the Gospel « In Principio Erat Verbum »*.

<sup>79</sup> CB, 39, 3.

<sup>80</sup> LI, 3, 82.

<sup>81</sup> CB, 39, 3, 4.

<sup>82</sup> CB, 39, 5; N, 2, 21, 10; CB, 26, 7; LI, 1, 14, 16.

<sup>83</sup> C, 1, 21; LI, 2, 33, 34.

<sup>84</sup> N, 2, 14, 11; CA, 12, 11; CB, 13, 12.

*mode* of loving, a confusion which is quite common in our days. When St. John talks of charity, he talks of contemplation. In contemplation, God not only communicates Himself to the understanding but also to the will. The reader will recall that contemplation is « a notice and loving attention in peace »<sup>85</sup>, a « loving attention in God »<sup>86</sup>, received passively by the infusion of God<sup>87</sup>. When we treated of faith and contemplation, we gave sufficient quotes to show that contemplation not only consists in an intellectual notice of God, infused into the understanding, but also in infused love. Since this latter should be more or less clear, it is not necessary to multiply more quotes in its behalf.

*Charity and the other theological virtues.* - From what we have said about the will as the principle mover in man, we can see that by the infusion of charity in the human will, the understanding is moved toward the divine object and in a way which is proportioned to the being of that object. Through the infusion of the Holy Spirit in the human will, the understanding is moved to the knowledge and dark experience of the Word, the Son of God. « Charity », says St. John, « makes the other virtues valid, giving them life and force to protect the soul, and grace and elegance to please the Beloved with them, because, without charity, no virtue is pleasing to God »<sup>88</sup>. The other virtues depend on charity. Due to charity, « the works of faith are given life and have great value, and without charity, they are worthless; for as St. James says, without charity, faith is dead (2, 20). »<sup>89</sup>. Without charity, without the interior motion of the Holy Spirit in the human will, no action can arrive to God. Philosophically, John has told us that each thing operates according to the being which it has<sup>90</sup>. Man only has a natural being so that by this alone he can never arrive to the supernatural. It is only by an infusion of the act of charity that man is moved to God in a supernatural manner, in a way which is proportioned to the divine being. This fact is of great importance due to the propensity of human nature to interpret its proper acts as divine once it is in the state of sanctifying grace. St. John says:

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<sup>85</sup> S, 2, 13, 6.

<sup>86</sup> S, 2, 12, 8.

<sup>87</sup> S, 2, 2, 2.

<sup>88</sup> N, 2, 21, 10.

<sup>89</sup> S, 3, 16, 1.

<sup>90</sup> S, 3, 26, 6; LI, 2, 34.

There is a great difference between God breathing *in the soul* and breathing *through the soul*. Because to breath *in* the soul means that God infuses in it grace, gifts, and virtues; and to breath *through* the soul means that God brings about a touch and motion in the virtues and perfections which are already given, renewing them and moving them so that they give an admirable fragrance and smoothness to the soul<sup>91</sup>.

One thing is the infusion of grace, which is a participation in the divine nature; another, to actualize the participation in the acts of the divine virtues (theological) which have been infused. Man does not work supernaturally because he has the virtues present. He only works supernaturally when God infuses the acts corresponding to these virtues. The Holy Spirit, says St. John, « moves and alters the soul to strong love so that it makes flights to God, because without this divine wind which moves the powers to the exercise of divine love, the virtues do not operate nor have their effects even though they be present in the soul »<sup>92</sup>. Only God can generate His Son and only the divine nature can aspirate the Holy Spirit. Man can but dispose himself to receive and accept such acts; he cannot cause them. Only through the act of charity, infused by God, are the other infused theological virtues exercised<sup>93</sup>.

This same fact is expressed by St. John in other places. speaking of contemplation in the *Dark Night*<sup>94</sup>, St. John says that this dark contemplation « simultaneously infuses in the soul both love and wisdom ». The reason why God never gives « mystical wisdom without love » is because « this same love infuses it »<sup>95</sup>. One cannot talk of an act of the theological virtue of faith, in the thought of St. John, without speaking of infused contemplation. And one cannot talk of infused contemplation without speaking of « MYSTICAL THEOLOGY, which the theologians call *mystical wisdom*, which says St. Thomas, is communicated and infused in the soul through love »<sup>96</sup>. Divine love infuses the virtues in the soul by the infusion of grace; and divine love interiorly infuses the acts of these virtues by which the soul arrives to union with God. Divine love, the Holy Spirit, is also a guide

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<sup>91</sup> CA, 26, 7; CB, 17, 5.

<sup>92</sup> CA, 12, 2; CB, 31, 4.

<sup>93</sup> CA, 16, 6; CB, 25, 7.

<sup>94</sup> N, 2, 12, 2.

<sup>95</sup> Also see CA, 18, 5; CB, 27, 8.

<sup>96</sup> N, 17, 2.

who directs the soul to the « perfection of the law of God and of faith »<sup>97</sup>.

This infused motion of the Holy Spirit in the human will has much to do with the assent of faith. By His presence and activity in the human will, the Holy Spirit moves the soul to the intellectual experience of the Son, an experience communicated by the Father. But the Holy Spirit still has another mission and this has to do with the understanding's assent. However, before seeing this, we must develop St. John's doctrine on the articles of faith.

*Mention of the articles of faith by St. John.* - There are various places where St. John talks of the articles of faith. Scarcely beginning the second book of the *Ascent*, St. John speaks of the « steps and articles » of faith<sup>98</sup>. In *The Spiritual Cantic*, there is mention of the propositions which faith teaches us<sup>99</sup>, and the mysteries of faith which rational creatures refer to the soul<sup>100</sup>. St. John speaks of the Evangelical Law<sup>101</sup>; and declaring himself against private revelations, whether they be about the same articles or additions to them, he states that there are no more articles to be revealed and that whatever is believed must be so only for having been sufficiently revealed to the Church<sup>102</sup>. Furthermore there are various places in his works where he quotes St. Paul, where the latter states that « *Fides ex auditu* (Rom. 10, 17) », that is, that faith comes from hearing. Even though St. John in no way denies the necessity of the symbol and of the Church, what a different interpretation he gives to belief in the articles of faith than that which is so common in our own day.

When John cites St. Paul, who says that faith comes from hearing, John explains the Scriptural passage in this way: « faith is not knowledge which enters through any sense, but is only the consent of the soul to that which enters through hearing »<sup>103</sup>. In case the reader be unaware of the contradiction involved in interpreting hearing as merely the bodily sense, John adds al-

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<sup>97</sup> LI, 3, 29. Also see C, 1, 11.

<sup>98</sup> 1, 1, 1.

<sup>99</sup> CA, 11, 3; CB, 12, 4.

<sup>100</sup> C, 7, 5.

<sup>101</sup> S, 2, 22, 3.

<sup>102</sup> S, 2, 27, 4.

<sup>103</sup> S, 2, 3, 3.

most immediately that faith not only does not give any notice or science through any sense, but « it deprives and blinds of all other notices and science », negating the light of the natural understanding, so that the latter is either lost completely or is put into darkness<sup>104</sup>. The soul, « in order to be well guided by faith ... to supernatural transformation, obviously has to be darkened and emptied of everything which it naturally contains, which is sensitive and rational. Because supernatural means that it is above the natural so that the latter remains below »<sup>105</sup>. It should be obvious from these quotes that the faith which enters through hearing has to do with mystical experience.

When John quotes the epistle of St. Paul *Ad Hebraeos*, that « *Fides est sperandarum substantia rerum argumentum non apparentium* (12, 1) », and translated it as « faith is the substance of things hoped for », it might seem that he gives these words an interpretation as in our own days, because he immediately says that « although the understanding consents in them with firmness and certitude, they are not things which the understanding can discover, because, if they were uncovered by the understanding, they would no longer be faith ». But John adds, « which, although it is certain to the understanding, is not clear but obscure »<sup>106</sup>. We have here once more the obscurity of contemplation and not the interpretation so prevalent in our day.

Let's return to a more detailed treatment of the words of St. Paul, that « *Fides ex auditu* ». In *The Spiritual Canticle*, St. John states that « ordinarily every time that some communication from God is found recounted in Scripture and is said to enter by hearing, such is found to be the manifestation of these naked truths [of mystical contemplation] in the understanding or the revelation of secrets of God...; and thus, the touch which is said to be communicated through hearing is very sublime and certain »<sup>107</sup>. In the *Ascent*, he repeats the same<sup>108</sup> and makes it clear that the reception of these naked truths about the divinity constitutes union with God in faith<sup>109</sup>. How can we apply this to the words of St. Paul that faith enters through hearing? St. John himself makes the application: « because, just as faith, as St.

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<sup>104</sup> S, 2, 3, 4.

<sup>105</sup> S, 2, 4, 2.

<sup>106</sup> S, 2, 6, 2.

<sup>107</sup> CA, 13-14, 15; CB, 14-15, 15.

<sup>108</sup> S, 2, 23, 3.

<sup>109</sup> S, 2, 26, 5.



Paul also says, is through the corporal ear, so also that which faith tells us, which is understood substance is through the spiritual ear »<sup>110</sup>. And the spiritual ear, or the ear of the soul, is the understanding<sup>111</sup>. It follows that « the hearing of the soul means to see with the understanding »<sup>112</sup>, which vision is the obscure one of contemplation<sup>113</sup>. In the mind of St. John of the Cross, therefore, there is a certain identification of the articles with what they signify. The question, however, of the darkness and obscurity of faith is not one of the articles being understood imperfectly by the natural force of the understanding; what John is treating is the dark experience of the truths behind the articles. The articles in themselves are finite words, which interpreted by a finite intellect through finite concepts cannot elevate to the supernatural order. But when the articles are accompanied by the obscure, supernatural mystical experience of their content, then we have an act of the theological virtue of faith and not before.

In verse XIIB (XIA) of *The Spiritual Canticle*, much doctrine on the articles of faith can be found. St. John states that by faith the truths of Christ are *infused* into the soul, « covered with obscurity and darkness »<sup>114</sup>. In this same verse, he states that the soul calls « the propositions and articles which faith proposes to us 'silvered resemblances' »<sup>115</sup>. Continuing with the metaphor, he says the following:

Faith is compared to silver in the propositions which it teaches us; and the truths and substance which are contained in them are compared to gold. This same substance which we believe dressed and covered with silver of faith, we will see and enjoy in the other life, the gold of faith being uncovered and made bare<sup>116</sup>.

He is not speaking here of the articles as they would be grasped by the mere natural understanding, for he tells us that faith is clean of all « natural forms »<sup>117</sup>, and that « if we close the eyes of the understanding to the things of above and to those of below..., we will remain only in faith » whose truths

<sup>110</sup> CA, 13-14, 15; CB, 14-15, 15.

<sup>111</sup> CA, 13-14, 13; CB, 14-15, 13.

<sup>112</sup> CA, 13-14, 15; CB, 14-15, 15.

<sup>113</sup> CA, 13-14, 16; CB, 14-15, 16.

<sup>114</sup> CB, 12, 2. Also see 6 and CA 9, 1, 5.

<sup>115</sup> CB, 12, 4; CA, 11, 3.

<sup>116</sup> CB, 12, 3; CA, 11, 2.

<sup>117</sup> CB, 12, 4; CA, 11, 3.

are « silvered, because in this life faith proposes them to us as dark and covered »<sup>118</sup>. In so far as that which is given and communicated by faith is « God Himself »<sup>119</sup>, there seems to be a certain identification of the truths infused in the soul with the articles. The articles, in so far as they be considered finite words, are inadequate to communicate to us an infinite God, but what they do communicate, they communicate faithfully. In so far as the act of the theological virtue of faith refers to the truths infused in the soul and inadequately signified in the articles, St. John never questioned the truth of the latter. The articles, without mystical experience, cannot serve as a proximate means for union with God, but they do serve as a remote means, showing the soul what is to be done to receive grace, retain it, and grow in the knowledge and love communicated by it. When the articles are accompanied by mystical experience, then the soul has present what they signify so that they are seen to correspond with the reality signified.

*The assent of the intellect to the truths of faith.* - We have treated the object of faith, the light of faith, the guide who brings the soul to the experience of faith, and the articles of faith. However, there are still a few problems remaining which must be answered and these have to do with the assent of faith and why faith as we have described it is not vision.

Let us turn our attention first to the problem of the assent of faith. An assent belongs to the understanding; a consent to the will<sup>120</sup>. When John talks of faith, he does not speak of the assent but of the consent. We have already seen that he has described faith as science which does not enter by any sense, « but only is the *consent* [emphasis is ours] of the soul to that which enters through hearing »<sup>121</sup>. And we have seen that he says that by means of faith the understanding *consents* (emphasis is ours) with firmness and certitude » to the things of God, because « they are not things which the understanding discovers »<sup>122</sup>. Faith, he says in another place, « *makes* (emphasis is ours) one believe truths revealed by God Himself which truths are above every light and exceed all human understanding with-

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<sup>118</sup> CB, 12, 4; CA, 11, 3.

<sup>119</sup> CB, 12, 4; CA, 11, 3.

<sup>120</sup> S, I, 11, 2, 3.

<sup>121</sup> S, 2, 3, 3.

<sup>122</sup> S, 2, 6, 2.

out any proportion »<sup>123</sup>. The « consent » and the « makes » which we have emphasized indicate that the cause of the act of faith proceeds more from the will than from the understanding. Through the infusion of the act of charity, « there is communicated to the soul all of the Wisdom of God in general, which is the Son of God, which is communicated in faith »<sup>124</sup>. It is divine love, the Holy Spirit, which infuses mystical wisdom into the soul<sup>125</sup>. And it is the Holy Spirit who moves the will interiorly and supernaturally by His presence in it, making the soul believe the truths revealed by God. When the soul gives its free *consent* to this infused motion of the Holy Spirit in its will<sup>126</sup>, its understanding at the same time gives its assent. This is the reason why St. John says that faith is a *consent* to the truths revealed and not an *assent* of the understanding. Here also we have the reason for the firmness and certitude of the consent. The certitude of faith comes from the author of the infused movement in the will, that is, from the Holy Spirit. The certitude of faith, then, results from infused charity.

Let us briefly discuss John's concept of belief. When he says « he who is to come to unite himself in union with God must not go by understanding or by attaching himself to pleasure, or to the sense, or to the imagination, but by believing His being, which does not fall into the understanding, or in appetite, or in imagination or any other sense », by « not understanding », John means by human industry, and by « believing », he means the consent of the will to the motion of charity infused by the Holy Spirit. The soul which travels to God, then, must go « walking in faith, believing and not understanding »<sup>127</sup>.

It might seem that Baruzi contradicts our interpretation of the orthodoxy of St. John and of the necessity of the articles of faith. Even though Baruzi affirms, as we ourselves do, that in the doctrine of St. John faith is a mystical category<sup>128</sup>, he maintains that according to the mind of St. John every formula betrays faith and that faith is not circumscribed by any dogma<sup>129</sup>. He further states that faith is an abyss, beyond all perceivable

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<sup>123</sup> S, 2, 3, 1.

<sup>124</sup> S, 2, 29, 6.

<sup>125</sup> N, 2, 27, 2; CB, 27, 8.

<sup>126</sup> LI, 1, 9; 3, 24.

<sup>127</sup> LI, 3, 48.

<sup>128</sup> BA-SA, 446.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

data<sup>130</sup>. He adds that for St. John every dogmatic affirmation is secondary<sup>131</sup>, and that John's mysticism goes beyond the limits of Christianity<sup>132</sup>.

However, it does not seem to us that Baruzi considers St. John's mystical doctrine as heterodox. Baruzi clarifies his position by saying that he does not conceive St. John as absorbed in a God which is opposed to the God of Christianity<sup>133</sup>. He affirms that St. John's mysticism is both Christian and Catholic<sup>134</sup>. The affirmations of Baruzi concerning dogma as secondary and as the betrayal of faith must be understood, in our opinion, in the same way as they would be interpreted by such men as Arintero, Jimenez Duque, Joannes a Cruce Peters, Maritain, Amatus van de H. Familie, Brice, Emeterio del S. Corazón, Gabriel de Santa María Magdalena, and Merton<sup>135</sup>, that is to say, that the articles of faith are not proportioned to the reality which they represent. Baruzi, furthermore, maintains that mystical experience is not limited to Catholics. He sees in the doctrine of St. John a universal doctrine of mysticism and, for that reason, a doctrine whose validity reaches out beyond the borders of Christianity<sup>136</sup>. « Of all the great mystics », he states, « John of the Cross most intimately realizes the universal and permanent conditions of divine union »<sup>137</sup>. Far from contradicting our interpretation, it seems to us that Baruzi agrees with it on that point.

*Faith distinguished from vision.* - We still have to consider a fundamental problem. If what we have stated is true, that through contemplation the divine essence itself is that which is experienced, then why is such an experience called faith rather than vision? On the part of the subject experiencing, the reason is clear. The human understanding does not reach the certitude of these truths by its natural power; the certitude and the truths are infused. However, this does not seem to be a completely sat-

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<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 460.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 454.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 230.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 230, 235, 260, 529.

<sup>135</sup> AR-EV, 112, 117; BA-SA, 446, 454, 456, 652; JI-TE, 89, 90; JO-TE, 443; MA-DI, 498; AM-FO, 234-236, 252; BR-SP, 60, 61; EM-NO, 40; GAB-UN, 42; MER-AS, 92, 93, 264.

<sup>136</sup> BA-SA, 230.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, Also see 600-601.

isfactory solution to the problem. The knowledge of the divine essence in the next life will also be infused, even though then we will see God « face to face ». If mystical experience consists in a contemplation of the divine essence in order to be proportioned to the same, the problem remains of how the contemplation of this life differs from that of the next. St. John has told us that the knowledge of this life is dark and that in the coming life we will have clear manifestation. But when the soul arrives to spiritual marriage in this life, the manifestation of the divine essence given the soul is very clear. However, St. John would tell us that in comparison with the vision awaiting the soul in the next life, even the clear experience of matrimony can be called dark and a knowledge in faith. The problem remains of how are the two contemplations to be distinguished?

For the answer to this question we must turn to the Sanjuanist doctrine of merit, a doctrine which we unfortunately cannot discuss in length here. Since one theological virtue does not operate without the operations of the others, an act of charity involves a simultaneous act of faith. Since one act of charity merits another more intense act of the same virtue<sup>138</sup>, the soul also merits an act of greater illumination in faith. Whenever the soul receives one communication and freely consents to it, the soul merits another more intense one not yet received. As a result, the communication received can always be called faith in relation to the one simultaneously merited. In this way, faith remains a seeing through an enigma or in a mirror and the *substance* or beginnings of things hoped for.

*The experience of the Word.* - In relation to the object of faith, the interpretation of Sanson is interesting. He reminds us that St. John speaks of the natural presence of God in all creatures, the presence by which God conserves them in being<sup>139</sup>. Sanson affirms that through the practice of spiritual nakedness, the experimental union with this natural presence of God is effected<sup>140</sup>. The distinction between the natural and supernatural presence, he adds, is for us; it does not signify any change in God. Sanson concludes that « the natural presence becomes supernatural when the soul, responding to the call of the Word dwelling in its center, remains in poverty and nakedness of spirit »<sup>141</sup>. The contemplation is really not so supernatural in

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<sup>138</sup> CB, 33, 7.

its object since God is always in the soul<sup>142</sup>. The adoptive filiation of the soul by God does not come about by sanctifying grace but rather through this natural presence. The Sonship is an ontological relation and not so much a moral one. Sanctifying grace, according to Sanson, « would be the adoptive filiation as a state, while actual grace would be the adoptive filiation as operation, and the acts of the latter would generate in us the habits which would actuate the adoptive filiation as a state. These habits are those of faith, hope, and charity, or better those of the Holy Spirit who purifies the soul, sanctifies it and conforms it to the Word dwelling in it, so that the soul merits the Word's communication »<sup>143</sup>. Urbina seems to be in agreement with Sanson, maintaining that the spiritual person « enters within the 'center of the soul', where it enjoys God » through mystical prayer. He adds that the presence of God in « this central habitation », « we can call of the natural order »<sup>144</sup>.

Maritain, on the other hand, maintains that God is within us by grace as an object<sup>145</sup>. Eulogio de San Juan de la Cruz agrees with Maritain, maintaining that this natural union, concerning which Sanson and Urbina speak, has nothing to do with « the union of the soul with God mentioned by St. John of the Cross »<sup>146</sup>. Together with Arintero, Garrigou-Lagrange, and probably many more, Eulogio maintains that the filiation and union with God are due to sanctifying grace<sup>147</sup>.

As ought to be clear from our anterior development, we are in agreement with the latter authors. The union and experience of God enjoyed by the soul refer to God's supernatural presence. In our opinion, there seem to exist certain difficulties in considering the filiation as effected by the natural presence of God in the soul. Such a filiation would have to be either natural or adoptive. If it is natural, then every creature would have it, with the resultant danger of pantheism. In order that faith communicate God to the soul in a manner proportioned to the divine essence, God would have to be naturally in the soul in a

<sup>139</sup> SA-ES, 92-93, 94, 95-98, 112. Sanson refers to S, 2, 6, 3.

<sup>140</sup> SA-ES, 92.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 98-99.

<sup>144</sup> UR-PE, 204. Also see 215-219 and UR-VE, 515.

<sup>145</sup> MA-DI, 510.

<sup>146</sup> EU-TR, 67.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, 181, 169.

proportioned manner. It would seem, then, that there would be an essential identification or equality between God and creatures. But we have seen that St. John constantly insists on the lack of proportion of any creature with God. St. John, as a result, does not imply pantheism.

Another difficulty with the position of Sanson would seem to be that if this filiation is adoptive, every creature would be an adoptive son of God. On the other hand, if the adoption is made to a lower nature without any participant equality (sanctifying grace), then the terms « filiation » and « sonship » would not seem to be correctly used.

In relation to the references made to St. John by Sanson to prove his position, Eulogio de San Juan de la Cruz gives us one from the same chapter of the *Ascent* used by Sanson to prove the opposite. St. John states that « when we speak of the union of the soul with God, we do not speak of this substantial union, which is always made »<sup>148</sup>. Eulogio concludes that St. John excludes the possibility that he is treating of a mere natural union<sup>149</sup>.

Besides the quote just given, it seems to us necessary to recall that when St. John speaks of the need of the theological virtues and the insufficiency of any creature to serve as a proximate means for union with God, he explicitly says that even though every creature has « a certain relation with God and a trace of Him », « from God to them there is no respect or *essential similitude* [emphasis is ours], rather the distance which there is between His divine being and theirs is infinite, and therefore it is impossible that the understanding penetrate into God by means of creatures, whether they be celestial or earthly, in so far as they lack the proportion of similitude »<sup>150</sup>. The lack of proportion or essential similitude, and the impossibility of arriving to union with God by means of creatures applies to the soul of man as well as to creatures outside the soul. The soul of man, then, lacks proportion to the divine being and, as a result, St. John speaks of God as a supernatural object given to the soul through the infusion of sanctifying grace and not natural union which exists as long as the soul exists.

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<sup>148</sup> EU-TR, 67. S, 2, 5, 3 is referred to.

<sup>149</sup> EU-TR, 67.

<sup>150</sup> S, 2, 8, 3.

## THE SO-CALLED HUMAN MODE OF OPERATION OF FAITH

Those within the Church who hold the object experienced during contemplation (the object of faith according to our interpretation) to be of the natural order seem to be few. However, there are many theologians and writers of spiritual books who, in fact, denude faith of the full supernatural character previously described by holding a *natural* or human mode (non-mystical) of operation of faith. Among Sanjuanist interpreters can be found such names as Arintero, Garrigou-Lagrange, Maritain, Gabriel de Santa María Magdalena, Jimenez Duque, Merton, Brice, Crisógono de Jesús Sacramentado, Isidoro de San José, Teófilo de la Virgen del Carmen, Kavanaugh, Urbina, Sanson, and Benjamin de la Trinité to name a few<sup>151</sup>. We are sure that many more names of both Sanjuanists and non-Sanjuanists could be added to this list since, as can be seen from the selection of authors mentioned, the concept of a *natural* human mode of operation of the theological virtues seems to be quite common to the modern Church. Although our rejection of this doctrine was involved in our prior development of the meaning of theological faith, because of the wide spread popularity and acceptance of the human mode of faith, it is well worth our while to spend some time considering it from a Sanjuanist point of view.

In agreement with Arintero<sup>152</sup>, Garrigou-Lagrange divides the supernatural into that which is supernatural in its essence (*quoad substantiam*) and that which is supernatural in its mode of operation (*quoad modum*)<sup>153</sup>. Using this distinction, Arintero and Garrigou-Lagrange affirm that the theological virtues are

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<sup>151</sup> AR-CU, 38-39, 487-490, 536, 537, 554-558; AR-EV, 20-21, 184, 185, 191, 192, 212, 241, 321; GAR-AM, 572 and 576 imply the human mode of operation of the theological virtues; GAR-CH, 38, 46, 59, 161, 222-223, 272, 281, 325, 346, 349, 350; GAR-TR, 21, 82-84, 189, 517, 518, 520, 888, 889, 906. Maritain follows the Dominicans on faith and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. See MA-DI, 514-515, 519-525, 684, 689. Gabriel de S. M. Magdalena also seems to follow Garrigou-Lagrange and Arintero. See GAB-SA, 72-73, 105, 124, 127; GAB-UN, 60, 169, 170, 181, 261; 272, 274, 275. JI-TE, 254, 256, 258, 259, 265, 276-279, 442, 446; MER-AS, 183-186, 210-211, 212ff; BR-JO, 19, 22, 24; BR-SP, 16, 30, 88, 89, 111, 297-301. CR-CO, 15-20, 29, 30, 35, 39, 40, 63, 89. CR-SA, 68, 112-115, 118-122. IS-TE, 451-506. TE-ES, 359-360. KA-CA, although this author affirms that St. John uses faith in its proper and strict sense when he treats of mysticism, he calls mystical faith a theological virtue which is more mature (51-52). UR-PE, 139. SA-ES, 228. BEN-ED, 316, 334, 336-337.

<sup>152</sup> AR-CU, 487-490, 511-513.

<sup>153</sup> GAR-CH, 38, 59.



supernatural in essence (*quoad substantiam*), but that ordinarily they have a human mode (*quoad modum*) of operation<sup>154</sup>. According to these men, when the theological virtues have the help of an ordinary actual grace, a grace which in no way surpasses the natural human order of operation, their acts are supernatural<sup>155</sup>. There are far reaching consequences to this division of the supernatural into that which is *quoad substantiam* and that which is *quoad modum* when this division is applied to the operations of the theological virtues. Since the actual grace necessary for the actualization of these infused virtues does not involve an extraordinary intervention of God<sup>156</sup>, and since the theological virtues, although supernatural in essence, accommodate themselves to the human manner of operation<sup>157</sup>, that is, they accommodate themselves to operating through the use of finite images and concepts, freedom, etc.<sup>158</sup>, it follows that « the theological virtues are by themselves principles of acts which are in our hands to produce at will »<sup>159</sup>, « without any special inspiration »<sup>160</sup>, that is, without any more inspiration than that of ordinary actual grace. The active night of sense, as a result, which is the ascetic way, has for its proper character « *the human mode*, the force and proper initiative corresponding to the infused virtues »<sup>161</sup>.

In our opinion, there is a fundamental reason for this Dominican affirmation of the operation in a human manner of these virtues. In their interpretation of St. John, Arintero and Garrigou-Lagrange make many references to some articles of St. Thomas, which are found in the *Summa Theologiae* (1-2, 68, 1 and 2), where St. Thomas states that human reason, imperfectly informed by the theological virtues, is not sufficient to direct man to his supernatural end and, for that reason, needs the help of the gifts of the Holy Spirit<sup>162</sup>. By making their affirma-

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<sup>154</sup> AR-CU, 489, 512, 537, 554-558; AR-EV, 20-21; GAR-CH, 38, 46, 161, 222-223, 272, 276, 281, 325, 349; GAR-TR, 21, 189, 888, 906.

<sup>155</sup> This ought to be clear from the quotes given in note 154.

<sup>156</sup> GAR-CH, 327; GAR-TR, 889, with 101.

<sup>157</sup> AR-EV, 184, 185, 186, 191. GAR-TR, 84.

<sup>158</sup> AR-EV, 191, 186.

<sup>159</sup> GAR-TR, 888.

<sup>160</sup> AR-EV, 212.

<sup>161</sup> AR-CU, 38-39. Also see AR-CU, 536, 537, 554-558; GAR-EV, 184, 186, 191; GAR-CH, 272, 346; GAR-TR, 21, 189. The human mode of operation of the theological virtues is also implied in GAR-AM, 572, 576.

<sup>162</sup> See AR-EV, 200, 202, 212, 213, 214, 239, 241; GAR-TR, 83-86; GAR-CH, 273-293.

tion, Arintero and Garrigou-Lagrange seem to be faithful to the Thomistic tradition.

In disagreement with these Dominicans concerning the universal call to the mystical state and experience, but in agreement with them concerning the human mode of operation of the theological virtues is the doctrine of Crisógono de Jesús Sacramentado and Isidoro de San José. In our opinion, these two Discalced Carmelites deduce a logical consequence from the affirmation of an ordinary human mode of operation of the theological virtues. If these virtues can operate by a human mode, then why not the gifts of the Holy Spirit? The Dominicans mentioned, to a large extent, tried to interpret Thomistic and Sanjuanist doctrine concerning the theological virtues according to a determined interpretation of the Thomistic doctrine on the gifts. These two Carmelites do not see the reason for saving the gifts of the Holy Spirit from the application of the division of the supernatural into *quoad substantiam* and *quoad modum*. The gifts, as the theological virtues, are supernatural in essence (*quoad substantiam*) but usually only human and natural *quoad modum*<sup>163</sup>.

The argument of Crisógono and Isidoro in defense of a human mode of operation of the theological virtues is reduced to the following: It is a scholastic principle, repeated by St. John of the Cross<sup>164</sup>, that grace does not destroy human nature but perfects it<sup>165</sup>. These two Carmelites add another principle to the one just mentioned, another principle which is repeated various times by St. John: « Whatever is received is in the receiver according to the mode of the receiver »<sup>166</sup>. From these two principles, it follows that « as a quality, which is a complete and accidental form, grace is in the soul according to the condition of the soul itself; and to be according to the condition of the soul is to be accommodated to the soul's natural *mode* in relation to grace's being and its operation »<sup>167</sup>. As a result, « this identity of the *mode* of grace and that of the soul implies: First, the *imperceptibility* of grace by the subject who possesses it, and, as a result, the *imperceptibility* also of the lack or absence of this same grace ». This affirmation of Crisógono finds support

<sup>163</sup> CR-CO, 24, 26-27; IS-TE, 468-469, 470, 475-477.

<sup>164</sup> S, 3, 2, 7.

<sup>165</sup> CR-CO, 15. IS-TE, 468.

<sup>166</sup> IS-TE, 477. N, 1, 4, 2.

<sup>167</sup> CR-CO, 15. He refers to AQ-ST, 3, q. 63, a. 5.

in the doctrine of the Council of Trent (*Trident. Sess. 6, cap. 12*) and in that of St. Thomas<sup>168</sup>.

The second consequence of this identification of the mode of grace and that of the soul is the « impossibility of distinguishing *supernatural operations* from natural operations ». « It matters not », says Crisógono, « that the nature of the former be essentially distinct from that of the latter, since the *mode* of all of them are identical ». And finally, the third consequence is « the *possibility of the perfect development* of grace without ever leaving behind this natural or human *mode*, because it is a universal law, that every vital principle can arrive at its perfect development without leaving its proper *mode* of being and of operation ». And Crisógono continues by saying « if, then, grace is present and works in the soul according to the mode of the soul, that is to say, according to the *natural* and *human* mode, it is evident that it can arrive at its perfect development without leaving this natural and human mode »<sup>169</sup>. « By connatural or human mode », Crisógono understands, « that which corresponds to the being and to the actions of man as such, for example, to understand by means of the exterior and interior senses »<sup>170</sup>.

Crisógono continues deducing the consequences from his principles. Since grace is specifically one, « supernatural life is essentially the same in all souls, although individually it may be distinct ». « *As infused in the substance of the soul*, grace is a remote principle of operation, and as such cannot operate by itself ». There are needed, as a result, immediate principles of operation, which consist principally in the theological virtues<sup>171</sup>.

Crisógono cites St. Thomas when the latter makes an analogy between the essence of the soul and that of sanctifying grace. According to St. Thomas, the theological virtues flow from grace into the powers of the soul just as the powers flow from the soul's essence. From the theological virtues the powers are then moved to act<sup>172</sup>. Concerning this quote, Crisógono states that « although the comparison throws much light, one cannot carry it too far. The union of the theological virtues with grace is not as close as that of the powers with the essence of

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<sup>168</sup> CR-CO, 16. AQ-ST, 1-2, q. 112, a. 5. The reference to St. Thomas is Crisógono's.

<sup>169</sup> CR-CO, 16-17.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.* He refers to AQ-ST, 1-2, q. 110, a. 4, *ad* 1.

the soul. It suffices to recall that faith and hope exist many times without sanctifying grace »<sup>173</sup>. Crisógono, as a result, like Arintero and Garrigou-Lagrange, for having affirmed a human mode of operation of the theological virtues, concludes that faith and hope as *theological virtues* exist in the soul without grace<sup>174</sup>.

We have not yet finished with everything necessary for the development of the supernatural life according to the doctrine of Crisógono. The infused supernatural habits in the soul (the gifts and the virtues) cannot actuate themselves, nor can they be actuated by the forces of the soul, « since the natural order cannot determine the operations of the supernatural »<sup>175</sup>. Since the infused habits are not caused by acts of the soul but by God, only God can actuate them. This divine influence moving the habit to operation is an actual grace »<sup>176</sup>. Actual graces, then, « are *supernatural* [emphasis is ours] and transitory influences of God ordered to the sanctification of the soul ». And Crisógono adds that « these work as much in the understanding as in the will; a direct actuation, which comes from God and is terminated without intermediaries in our spiritual powers »<sup>177</sup>.

Supernatural life only is developed by supernatural operations<sup>178</sup>. But, says Crisógono, supernatural life can have « two modes of development: one human, the other superhuman »<sup>179</sup>. Giving the application of the division of the supernatural into *quoad substantiam* and *quoad modum*<sup>180</sup>, Crisógono says the following:

This division responds to two species of acts which the soul can realize in the supernatural order; some, whose supernatural character is reduced to the substance of the act, since its mode is natural; others, whose supernatural character is double, because it embraces the substance and the act at the same time.

The first characterize the development of the supernatural life according to the *human mode*; the second, the development according to the *superhuman mode*.

In the development according to the human mode, the process is normal. The habits are actuated in virtue of ordinary grace, which mov-

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<sup>173</sup> CR-CO, 19.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.* Also see AR-EV, 192; GAR-TR, 176 and GAR-CH, 280.

<sup>175</sup> CR-CO, 30.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>180</sup> See CR-SA, 154-155, where Crisógono makes the same division of the supernatural which the Dominicans, Arintero and Garrigou-Lagrange, make.

es them to work in conformity with nature and in conformity with grace. As the mode of the latter is human as we have seen, human also is the mode of the act which results<sup>181</sup>.

The development of the life of grace by the human mode characterizes the ascetic way; the development according to a superhuman mode is proper to the mystic way<sup>182</sup>. Crisógono pretends that the doctrine which he has put forth is that of St. John of the Cross<sup>183</sup>.

Let us end this exposition of the doctrine of Crisógono with a quote from his disciple Isidoro de San José. Summing up what we have already expounded, Isidoro says the following:

In the supernatural order, we have two actions of God upon the being informed by grace: a) the ordinary, and b) the extraordinary. The ordinary is that by which God (within this supernatural order) joins Himself to the being and operation proper to man. (Being and operation of a rational sensible creature). To understand and to love by means of a specifically concrete process: to understand through discourse and to love in logical relation (with knowledge); and b) the extraordinary is that by which God takes man from his connatural mode of operating to another which is superior and which is not specifically his<sup>184</sup>.

Needless to say, for Crisógono and Isidoro, the theological virtues have a human mode of operation; and they operate in this way during the active night of sense. We have seen, in brief, their system and the reasons adduced in defense of their position. It only remains to see if their doctrine is, in truth, that of St. John. However, in so far as Crisógono, Isidoro, Arintero, and Garrigou-Lagrangé seem to affirm that the doctrine of St. John on this point is substantially that of St. Thomas, there is no other alternative left open to us than to consider the doctrine of St. Thomas in our interpretation of that of St. John when other interpretations of both do not seem to us to be verisimilar.

Above all, these two doctors of the Church maintained certain common philosophical principles. St. John has told us that each thing operates according to the being or life which it has<sup>185</sup>. In St. Thomas this same principle is also found but more philo-

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<sup>181</sup> CR-CO, 39-40. See IS-TE, 468, 470.

<sup>182</sup> CR-CO, 40.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, 65-284. CR-SA, 110-112, 115-118, 174ff, 221ff.

<sup>184</sup> IS-TE, 487.

<sup>185</sup> S, 3, 26, 6. See Ll, 2, 34.

sophically expressed. For St. Thomas, the operations of a thing arise from its nature and are proportioned to that nature<sup>186</sup>. For this reason, when St. Thomas explains the need of the theological virtues, he explicitly states that « no nature can elevate itself to an *act* which exceeds the proportion of its virtues »<sup>187</sup>, and that « no act exceeds the proportion of its active principle »<sup>188</sup>.

In another place, St. Thomas, expressing this same principle, says that the « act of anything is not divinely ordered to something exceeding the proportion of its virtue, which virtue is the principle of its act, since, that nothing works in a manner superior to its virtue is due to the institution of divine providence »<sup>189</sup>. Up to this point, we do not seem to be in disagreement with the position of the two schools anteriorly mentioned.

However, let us proceed with our theme. Once the basic philosophical principle that no nature can surpass itself is understood, one better understands what St. Thomas means when he talks of the double aspect of the end of man. We can consider the end of man under two aspects: natural felicity, which can be reached by the principles of human nature (understanding and will); and supernatural felicity, that which exceeds the proportion of human nature and its virtues. To his supernatural end, « man is able to arrive only through the *divine virtue* [emphasis is ours], by means of a certain participation in the divinity »<sup>190</sup>. St. Thomas continues by stating the following:

and because such a felicity surpasses the proportion of human nature, the natural principles of man [understanding and will], through which he operates well according to their proportion, do not suffice to order man to the supernatural felicity mentioned. Due to this fact, it is necessary that God give men some principles by which he is ordered to supernatural felicity, as through his natural principles he is ordered to his connatural end, although not without divine help. The former principles are called theological, now because they have God as an object, in so far as through them one is rightly ordered to God, now because they are infused in us only by God<sup>191</sup>.

<sup>186</sup> AQ-ST, 1-2, q. 62, a. 1 *ad* 3; q. 63, a. 3c; q. 109, a. 3 *ad* 2, a. 5c.

<sup>187</sup> AQ-ST, 1-2, q. 109, a. 3 *ad* 2.

<sup>188</sup> AQ-ST, 1-2, q. 109, a. 5c. See AQ-DV, q. 24, a. 1 *ad* 1; SCG, 3, 147.

<sup>189</sup> AQ-ST, 1-2, q. 114, a. 2c.

<sup>190</sup> AQ-ST, 1-2, q. 62, a. 1c.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*

One can see that St. John and St. Thomas are in agreement, then, upon another philosophic principle: that which expresses that the means have to be proportioned to the end. And since it is necessary that the means and end be proportioned, St. John and St. Thomas concur in the need that man has for virtues (means) proportioned to his supernatural end; and these virtues are the theological. Once more what we have developed so far does not seem to be in disagreement with the doctrine of the Dominican and Carmelite points of view already mentioned. However, let us proceed to an application of these ideas.

If the theological virtues are proportioned to the supernatural end of man, their acts also have to be proportioned to this end. It follows that an operation done according to the human mode of the theological virtues is a contradiction and non-sense. St. John has repeatedly told us that no image, concept, etc. can be proportioned to God<sup>192</sup>. Since the « human mode » (as this expression has been interpreted by the Carmelite and Dominican schools) involves the use of images and finite concepts, the human mode cannot be proportioned to God who infinitely transcends all that. The only nature proportioned to produce acts proportioned to the divine nature as a supernatural end is the divine nature itself. This is the reason why in order to reach his supernatural end, man needs infused in his soul a participation in this nature. In this way, he can participate in the divine virtues<sup>193</sup>, and in the divine acts proportioned to these virtues.

St. John frequently employs another philosophical principle: two contraries cannot simultaneously fit in the same subject<sup>194</sup>. He applies this principle to the problem we have before us by stating that faith is above all understanding so that the soul that wants to unite itself with God by faith has to go by emptying itself of « everything which it naturally contains, which is sensitive and rational, because supernatural means above the natural. Therefore, the natural remains below »<sup>195</sup>. And when he talks of the philosophical principle that « every means must be proportioned to the end »<sup>196</sup>, he explicitly applies it saying that

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<sup>192</sup> S, 1, 4, 5; 4, 4, 5; 3, 12, 1; LI, 3, 48.

<sup>193</sup> AQ-ST, 1-2, q. 62, a. 1c.

<sup>194</sup> S, 1, 4, 2.

<sup>195</sup> S, 2, 4, 2.

<sup>196</sup> S, 2, 8, 2.

everything which falls in the human mode of understanding, etc. « remains very dissimilar and disproportioned... to God »<sup>197</sup>. Faith, being contrary to the human, natural mode of operation deprives man of his natural mode of operating<sup>198</sup>. The human mode of operation not only is disproportionate to this theological virtue but serves it as an impediment<sup>199</sup>.

In *The Living Flame of Love*, St. John clearly talks of the insufficiency of the human mode of operation for reaching God and clearly contradicts much of the interpretation of Crisógono. St. John says that:

it is befitting that he who receives accommodate himself to the mode of that which he receives, for in no other way will he be able to receive it and retain it except as it is given; because, as the philosophers say, anything which is received is in the receiver in the mode to which the receiver has accommodated itself.

From this it is clear that, if the soul then does not leave its active natural mode, it would not receive ... except according to the natural mode, and thus it would not receive the supernatural, but rather would remain only with a natural act; because the supernatural does not fall into the human mode, nor does it have anything to do with it<sup>200</sup>.

The soul, therefore, in relation to the proximate means for union with God, has to receive passively « according to the supernatural mode of God, and not according to the natural mode of the soul ». Meditation and the natural operations of the soul hinder the mode of God<sup>201</sup> when the theological virtues begin to operate. Anything which comes from human nature, « having its root and force in the natural » does not cease to be natural<sup>202</sup>.

The division which these two schools make between the supernatural *quoad substantiam* and *quoad modum* and the application of this division to the acts of the theological virtues, in our opinion, instead of showing that there exists a human mode of operation of these virtues, admits the fact that human mode of operation is not proportioned to the essence or substance of these virtues. Using philosophy, one can see that from a human

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<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>198</sup> S, 2, 3, 5.

<sup>199</sup> S, 2, 4, 4. 7; 15, 1; 16, 7; LI, 3, 48.

<sup>200</sup> LI, 3, 34.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, 74.



nature as an interior cause, only natural, finite operations can arise and, as a result, only acts which are infinitely distant from the divine nature and without proportion to it.

If we turn our attention once more to the doctrine of St. Thomas on the theological virtues, we find that he is in agreement with our interpretation of the insufficiency of the human mode of operation in relation to the theological virtues. Clarifying the way in which God is the object of the theological virtues, St. Thomas says that « the object of the theological virtues is God Himself, the last end of things, according as He exceeds our rational knowledge »<sup>203</sup>. The necessity for the infusion of these virtues rests on the fact that these virtues have to do with divine things « which surpass human reason »<sup>204</sup>. Here it is not a question of merely an object which surpasses human natural capacities, but *of the mode by which it is known*: « When we say that no nature is able to elevate itself above itself », says St. Thomas, « we do not wish to say that it is not able to arrive at an object superior to it; since it is evident that our understanding by natural cognition can know some things which are superior to it, as remains clear in our natural knowledge of God. But, what we wish to say is that a *nature is not able to produce an act* [emphasis is ours] which exceeds the proportion of its virtue »<sup>205</sup>. God, the First Truth, is the object of the theological virtue of faith<sup>206</sup>, not as grasped by natural reason through the symbol, but by *an act which is proportioned to the divine essence and which surpasses the proportion of human nature*.

When the Dominican school interpreted the need of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, it forgot what St. Thomas had said about the proportion of the theological virtues to their end. The interpretation of the Dominicans puts St. Thomas in contradiction with himself. In effect, they make St. Thomas affirm that man needs virtues or means proportioned to his supernatural end, which means are the theological virtues, and at the same time that the acts of these virtues have a human mode of operation not proportioned to this end. Arinterro and Garrigou-Lagrange were too permeated with the theological tradition from which they were trying to break in order not to still sustain many

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<sup>203</sup> AQ-ST, 1-2, q. 62, a. 2c. See AQ-DV, 14, 8 *ad* 9.

<sup>204</sup> AQ-ST, 1-2, q. 62, a. 2 *ad* 2.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>206</sup> AQ-ST, 2-2, q. 1, a. 1c.

of its doctrines. However, we cannot resolve in the brief space of this investigation the problem presented by articles 1 and 2 of question 68 of *Prima Secundae*. We can only indicate that another interpretation of these articles is needed.

Although we agree with Crisógono and Isidoro that St. John held that grace does not destroy human nature but that it supposes it and perfects it, and although we concede that St. John maintained the philosophic principle that any thing received is in the receiver according to the mode of the receiver, and that which follows from this, that grace is in the soul according to the condition of the soul, the consequences which are deduced by Crisógono and Isidoro we hold to be fallacious. How grace accommodates itself to human nature is a point which, in part, we have already seen when treating the assent of faith, namely, grace accommodates itself to human freedom — not to the senses. In the natural moral order, even though a man may have first movements of inordinate sense desire and an inordinate first movement of the will resulting from it, such movements are not considered as properly human or those of the person involved. They do not become, properly speaking, morally human until they are freely consented to by the will. Grace accommodates itself to human nature not by operating through sense images, etc. — things which contradict its essence as a divine nature participated — but in so far as the Holy Spirit presents Himself in the human will under the form of befittingness, moving the will and intellect to the divine nature as object. When this happens, we have a first movement (of charity) in the supernatural order. In order that this first movement become human, it has to be freely accepted by man. Once freely accepted, we have an act of the theological virtues and not until then. In this way, both their supernatural character is preserved and their human participation. Their acts proceed from the divine nature as from an interior cause. They proceed from man only in the sense that by his free consent to the motion of charity, he participates in their divine acts. When the will freely consents to this first movement, the intellect assents to the divine object presented to it in darkness.

The interpretation of Crisógono, Garrigou-Lagrange, Arinero, etc. of the accommodation of grace to human nature by operating through the human mode, as they define it, is not an accommodation of grace to human nature. Crisógono has used the philosophical principle of the receiver, but he has forgotten

another which expresses that « it is befitting that he who receives accommodates himself to the mode of that which he receives », which principle we have already cited. All of these men have forgotten the philosophic principles expressing that acts are proportioned to their virtues and the virtues to their respective natures. Natures are known through their operations. Due to the observation of determined operations, a corresponding interior cause of them is affirmed to exist. This interior cause is called a nature. Operations of a human mode have as their interior cause a human nature and natural human virtues and not a divine nature participated, or divine, theological virtues, proportioned to the supernatural end of man. From a divine nature participated, *the human mode of operation cannot flow*. To say that the human mode of operation, as they interpret this expression, flows from sanctifying grace is to reduce sanctifying grace to human nature and to reduce the supernatural to the natural.

The affirmation of Crisógono of a « perfect development of grace without leaving » the natural human mode of operation reduces itself to the same defect of confusing the natural with the supernatural and of unwillingly and unknowingly, in our opinion, falling into Pelagianism. To affirm that « every vital principle can arrive to its perfect development without leaving its proper mode of being and of operating » and to conclude that grace, a divine nature participated, can reach « its perfect development without leaving » the natural human mode shows that Crisógono also was too conditioned by the theology which he had learned to interpret adequately the Sanjuanist and Thomistic principles which he used. He did not adequately understand what a nature is or the relation of proportion existing between it and its operations and active potencies (virtues). He admits that grace is a remote principle of operation, since it is a nature, but he forgets that grace is pure act, and he forgets that operations in a human mode are not proportioned to that nature.

Crisógono's use of the authority of the Council of Trent and that of St. Thomas in favor of a human mode of the theological virtues fails to be convincing. The reader will recall that Crisógono hoped to prove his point by showing that one cannot know with certitude if he is in the state of grace. However, these authorities do not prove that a human mode of operation of the theological virtues exists but that Crisógono on this point again forgot to interpret St. Thomas according to the latter's

own principles. The certitude of possessing grace which St. Thomas treats is defined according to Aristotelian categories; it is the certitude of conclusions deduced from « indemonstrable universal principles »<sup>207</sup>. Indemonstrable universal principles, as well as the conclusions deduced from them, have an absolute certitude. The knowledge of whether one has grace or not is not of this type. But, even though such certitude is lacking, according to St. Thomas, man can still know that he has grace through other means, the description of which seems to be infused contemplation<sup>208</sup>. From the fact that the possession of grace cannot be reduced to self-evident first principles, St. Thomas in no way concluded, as Crisógono would have him do, that one cannot know if he has grace. On the contrary, St. Thomas seems to have held that the possession of grace is perceptible. The problems of certitude and of a less perfect knowledge are not one and the same.

We have seen that Crisógono, in agreement with Arintero and Garrigou-Lagrange, maintained that the theological virtue of faith can exist without grace. This certainly is not the thought of St. John, who held the proportion between these virtues and the supernatural end of man; nor is it the thought of St. Thomas, who explicitly affirmed that the theological *virtue* of faith does not exist in the soul without sanctifying grace<sup>209</sup>. For having confused the human mode with acts of the theological virtues, Crisógono, Arintero, and Garrigou-Lagrange logically concluded that the presence of sanctifying grace was not necessary for the presence and operation of faith as a theological virtue<sup>210</sup>. Since these men hold the proportionality of this virtue to God, a logical conclusion of their position would seem to be that grace is superfluous to the virtue's proportionality to God. We would then seem to be left with an interpretation having some similarities with that of Sanson.

<sup>207</sup> AQ-ST, 1-2, q. 112, a. 5c.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.* The words of Aquinas are the following: « Tertio modo cognoscitur aliquid coniecturaliter per aliqua signa. Et hoc modo aliquis cognoscere potest se habere gratiam: in quantum scilicet percipit se delectari in Deo, et contemnere res mundanas; et in quantum homo non est conscius sibi alicuius peccati mortalis. Secundum quem modum potest intelligi quod habetur Apoc. 2, 17, *Vincenti dabo manna absconditum, quod nemo novit nisi qui accipit: quia scilicet ille qui accipit, per quandam experientiam dulcedinis novit, quam non experitur ille qui non accipit. Ista tamen cognitio imperfecta est.* ».

<sup>209</sup> AQ-DV, 14, 6. That which remains in the sinner is the habit of faith, not the virtue (AQ-DV, 14, 6 *ad* 6).

<sup>210</sup> AR-EV, 192. GAR-TR, 176. GAR-CH, 280.

We would like to make one final observation about the doctrine of Crisógono and the Dominicans concerning the human mode of operation of the theological virtues. This observation has to do with a doctrine which is sufficiently common to the modern Church, namely, the doctrine of actual graces. Crisógono has given us a justification for affirming their existence. Although we cannot enter into a lengthy treatment of them here, we do wish to say the following. Crisógono has said that the theological virtues cannot be actuated by the natural forces of the soul for the very reason that these latter are *natural*. He affirmed, for that reason, a transitory divine influence to move the virtues to act. However, if these influences move man in a natural, human way (through the senses, etc.), they cannot move him to God in a manner proportioned to the divine being, so that these so-called actual graces cannot actuate the theological virtues. As Crisógono himself has told us « the natural order cannot determine the operations of the supernatural ».

*Contradictions present concerning theological faith in the interpretations of other authors.* - Our affirmations on faith and charity in the doctrines of St. John of the Cross (and in that of St. Thomas) are not unique to us. Garrigou-Lagrange affirms that « the theological virtues have God Himself as an *object* »<sup>211</sup>, that faith « leads us to know the supernatural end toward which we are obligated to walk »<sup>212</sup>, and that the theological virtues make us « tend effectively to that supernatural end and arrive there »<sup>213</sup>. He affirms that faith reveals God in His intimate nature<sup>214</sup>, that the infused virtue of faith « belongs to the same order as eternal life »<sup>215</sup>, and that grace exists in us as a principle of divine operations<sup>216</sup>. However, after having made these affirmations, Garrigou-Lagrange adds that the ordinary director of faith is reason<sup>217</sup>, that faith ordinarily operates according to the human mode and not according to the divine<sup>218</sup>, and, as a result, that the acts of man even illuminated by faith do not suffice to effectively direct the soul to its supernatural end<sup>219</sup>.

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<sup>211</sup> GAR-TR, 59.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

<sup>214</sup> GAR-AM, 584.

<sup>215</sup> GAR-TR, 727.

<sup>216</sup> GAR-CH, 56.

<sup>217</sup> GAR-TR, 83, 84. GAR-CH, 223.

<sup>218</sup> GAR-TR, 83, 84, 86, 906.

<sup>219</sup> GAR-CH, 294.

Seeing the insufficiency of the acts of such a faith to direct man to his supernatural end, Garrigou-Lagrange has recourse to the gifts of the Holy Spirit<sup>220</sup>. Faith, in the thought of this theologian has as its *raison d'être* to reach man's supernatural end, but, at the same time, it is incapable of doing so. It seems to us that what logically follows from this is that only the gifts of the Holy Spirit are proportioned to this end and there is not much need for the theological virtues.

Arintero also has struggled with the problems involved in the interpretation of faith. With St. John and St. Thomas, Arintero repeats that « to operate follows upon being »<sup>221</sup>. Since we participate in the divine being through the infusion of sanctifying grace, we also « participate in the corresponding operations, and as the participation in grace is real and formal, so should the other be »<sup>222</sup>. He adds that « to progress in the divine life, we ought to execute divine operations ». For this reason, with the infusion of grace there are also infused « energies of the order », the theological virtues<sup>223</sup>. These virtues unite us to God<sup>224</sup>, making us participants in His vital actions<sup>225</sup>, and, as a result, in the operations characteristic of eternal life<sup>226</sup>. « The operations proper to God », in which we participate, « are to know and love Himself as He is in Himself, in His absolute Unity and in His ineffable Trinity »<sup>227</sup>. It follows that by faith « we know God in His intimate life »<sup>228</sup>, and that by the three theological virtues « we direct and order ourselves to God, knowing Him in Himself »<sup>229</sup>. « The supernatural life », he says, « in its intimate depth, is identical in this exile and in heaven »<sup>230</sup>. As in glory when intellects are united immediately with the Word<sup>231</sup>, thus also the faith of this life « goes directly to God Himself in His reality »<sup>232</sup>.

After having sung these praises to theological faith and

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<sup>220</sup> GAR-TR, 116, 906.

<sup>221</sup> AR-EV, 112.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, 113.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, 183.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, 291.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*, 193.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*, 291.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*, 113.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, 131, 191.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, 185.

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*, 118.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.

having put himself in agreement with St. Thomas and St. John by so doing, and after having admitted that natural knowledge and love can only reach God by « almost useless analogical representations »<sup>233</sup>, and that any representation or image is infinitely distant from the divine reality, disfiguring it and reducing it « to the level of our capacity »<sup>234</sup>, due to his theological antecedents, he contradicts everything which he has stated in our previous paragraph. He affirms that grace accommodates itself to human nature<sup>235</sup>, that although by faith we know God in Himself, « faith... represents Him to us as remote or veiled, and only allows us to see Him enigmatically, as through symbols and representations or human analogies »<sup>236</sup>, operating according to the human mode<sup>237</sup>. He continues by saying that although we live the supernatural life of grace, ordinarily this supernatural life is lived in a connatural and human mode<sup>238</sup> and that « nothing is changed in the *ordinary mode* which we have for functioning »<sup>239</sup>. « The just man himself », he says, « enriched as he is with infused truths, continues being the true and principal author of these supernatural operations »:<sup>240</sup> the supernatural, theological virtues, flowing from and depending upon the divine nature participated, « are exercised in a *human mode*, under the directive norm of reason »<sup>241</sup>. After having affirmed that the theological virtues direct and orientate us to God, knowing Him in Himself, Arintero is forced to affirm that « human reason, even supported by the theological virtues, cannot conduct us efficaciously to our ultimate end »<sup>242</sup>.

However, Arintero, like Garrigou-Lagrange, did not like these conclusions. He speaks of the human mode of operating of the theological virtues and sees, at least implicitly, that such a conception without an addition to take these virtues out of this mode of operation falls into a type of naturalism. For this reason, after saying that the theological virtues reveal God to us under images, etc., he adds that faith « is complemented by

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<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*, 112.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*, 184.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*, 190, 191. St. Thomas states that we see God « enigmatically » through the *contemplation* of this life. See AQ-ST, 2-2, q. 180, a. 4c.

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*, 200. AR-CU, 487.

<sup>238</sup> AR-CU, 487.

<sup>239</sup> AR-EV, 202.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, 201-202.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*, 186.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.

the gifts of *science, understanding, and wisdom*, with which the Divine Reality itself is reached, is touched, and is tasted »<sup>243</sup>. Seeing the insufficiency of the human mode of the theological virtues as adequate for man to reach his supernatural end, Arintero adds the need of the gifts of the Holy Spirit which operate according to a divine mode, according to a mode proportioned to the being of God<sup>244</sup>. In our opinion, Arintero was struggling to reach in its purity the theology of St. John and St. Thomas on the theological virtues. Implicit in his affirmation of the insufficiency of the human mode of operation of these virtues is the rejection of this theory. He sees philosophically that in order to be directed to a supernatural end, the means must be proportioned to that end. He sees that the conception of the theological virtues which he has does not comply with this philosophic principle. In order to save the supernatural character of these virtues and of the Catholic religion, he has recourse to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Before his death, he arrived at completely rejecting the theology of the two ways of sanctifying oneself, calling this doctrine pseudo-traditional and a great error<sup>245</sup>. With his rejection of the ascetic life as a proportionate means to reach man's supernatural end, there is implicit a complete mystical interpretation of the life of grace and of the operations of the theological virtues.

Another mind which has struggled with this problem is that of Crisógono de Jesús Sacramentado. Even though he never arrived at the rejection of the theology of the two ways, and, on the contrary, had become one of its most important defenders, it does not seem to us that he was completely satisfied with this theory. Crisógono saw what the theory of the theological virtues ought to be. He affirmed that the immediate object of faith is God as the supernatural end of man<sup>246</sup>, that the theological virtues illumine the soul because they put it in direct contact with God<sup>247</sup>, and that faith communicates God Himself to us<sup>248</sup>. It is even difficult to see how his description of ascetic

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<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*, 190.

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.

<sup>245</sup> His complete rejection of the ways is found throughout his book entitled *Cuestiones místicas* and especially in pages 8-66. He calls the two ways pseudo-traditional on page 39.

<sup>246</sup> CR-CO, 20.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*, 113.

<sup>248</sup> CR-SA, 323.



faith is distinguished from mystical faith<sup>249</sup>. He admits that in the thought of St. John, « the only proximate means for the union of the understanding with God is faith »<sup>250</sup>, that « the natural world does not serve as a proximate means to arrive to God »<sup>251</sup>, and that all discursive exercise, even philosophic contemplation, is insufficient « to arrive to God »<sup>252</sup>. However, trying to make the thought of St. John conform to what Crisógono considered to be orthodoxy, Crisógono affirmed the division of the supernatural into *quoad substantiam* and *quoad modum*<sup>253</sup>, maintaining that « the faith concerning which St. John speaks is not the human mode of common or ordinary faith [realizing in this way, implicitly at least, its lack of proportion with the divine being], but illustrated faith »<sup>254</sup>. In our opinion, Crisógono, like Garrigou-Lagrange and Arintero, was struggling with this problem. On the one hand, he saw what the theory on faith should be; and, on the other, he tried to maintain the theology which he had inherited, falling, for this reason, into the contradictions which we have seen.

Garrigou-Lagrange, Arintero, and Crisógono are not the only ones who have struggled with the difficulties involved with the concept of the human mode of operation of the theological virtues. The same contradictions of a faith proportioned and at the same time not proportioned to the divine being, of a *human* mode of operation which is *supernatural*, of a faith which participates in the divine self-knowledge, but in an analogous and human manner, etc. is found in Jimenez Duque<sup>255</sup>, Maritain<sup>256</sup>, Gabriel de Santa María Magdalena<sup>257</sup>, Brice<sup>258</sup>, and Merton<sup>259</sup>, just to name a few. All these authors, with the exception of Crisógono, try to overcome the contradiction of a theological faith, at one and the same time proportioned and not proportioned to man's supernatural end, by recourse to the di-

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<sup>249</sup> CR-CO, 114-115.

<sup>250</sup> CR-SA, 320.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, 321.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*, 143-144.

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*, 154-155.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, 328.

<sup>255</sup> JI-TE, compare 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 249, 422 with 5, 6, 9, 88, 258; 293. See also JI-PE, 313.

<sup>256</sup> MA-DI, compare 494-495, 513, 645, 658 with 495 and 497.

<sup>257</sup> Compare GAB-IN, 254; SA, 72, 105-106; UN, 75, 159, 176 with GAB-UN, 60, 161, 272; AQ, 164-165.

<sup>258</sup> BR-SP, compare 13, 35, 60, 62 with 30, 99, 281, 282.

<sup>259</sup> MER-AS, compare 30, 92, 93, 253, 254, 264 with 183, 184, 210.

vine mode of operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit<sup>260</sup>. Crisógono also maintains that, besides the influence of a special actual grace, mystical experience is due to the divine mode of operation of the gifts<sup>261</sup>. But his thesis is distinguished from the other authors mentioned in so far as he holds that the human mode of operation also applies to the gifts, while the others maintain that the latter only have a divine mode of operation. Unfortunately, we cannot discuss the gifts and their relation to the theological virtues in this article. But, as can be seen from all of our anterior development, we affirm that the concept of a human mode of operation of the theological virtue of faith denudes faith of its basic supernatural character. Such a concept reduces the supernatural to the natural and inadvertently falls into Pelagianism. It may well be that today's crisis of faith within the Church is due to not understanding the true nature of theological faith. To orientate the Church along this road, St. John of the Cross is the Providential Doctor<sup>262</sup>.

Dr. JOSEPH FERRARO  
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<sup>260</sup> AR-CU, 536; AR-EV, 122, 209, 212; GAR-TR, 116, 181, 906, 915; JI-TE, 293, 294, 443; MA-DI, 524, 645, 672; GAB-IN, 255, 256; GAB-SA, 72, 105-106, 124, 127; GAB-UN, 60, 169, 175, 272; GAB-DO, 57; BR-SP, 30, 88-89; MER-AS, 183, 184, 210.

<sup>261</sup> CR-CO, 175.

<sup>262</sup> SI-FR, 332-371. The expression « Providential Doctor » is Fr. Silverio's.

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